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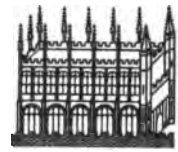

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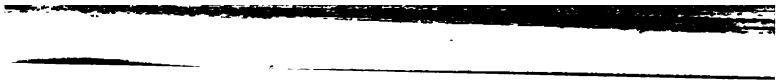

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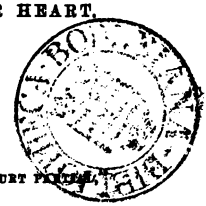

BY

MRS. PULLAN,

AUTHOR OF "THE LADY'S LIBRARY," "THE COURT PRIMER," "PRACTICAL GRAMMAR," ETC.;

EDITOR OF THE WORK TABLE OF ALL THE LEADING PERIODICALS.

"The destinies of our race depend more on its future mothers than on anything else."—REV. T. BINNEY.

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TO

THE MEMORY OF

THE MISSES THACKRAY,

OF

PROSPECT HOUSE, KNARESBROUGH,

THE MATERNAL GUARDIANS OF MY INFANCY,

THE WISE AND FAITHFUL COUNSELLORS OF RIPER YEARS,

This Little Volume is Dedicated,

BY THEIR GRATEFUL AND AFFECTIONATE PUPIL,

THE AUTHOR.

"She, being dead, yet speaketh."

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INTRODUCTION.

READER! Did you ever witness the launch of one of those gallant vessels which form the bulwarks of our country? You may have admired the gracefulness of her fair proportions, her noble form, combining so much strength with such perfect beauty, the construction which enables her to become the home of hundreds for months together, the provision made for the comfort and safety of her crew! You may have wondered at her grandeur and her strength, and thought that surely she would ride in safety through the roughest sea, and return unscathed from the perils of the longest voyage!

But alas! a spark from a tiny lucifer may kindle flames which no human power can extinguish! A small leak may spring, and ere her crew can find safety she may fill, and dis-

appear beneath the waste of waters! Or she may, without being utterly destroyed, suffer such damage during even her first voyage that she may return utterly disabled into harbour, and serve henceforth no better purpose than to become firewood.

Is it possible to witness a launch without some such speculations and misgivings as these—to avoid thinking of the perils the ship must encounter from the rocks and shoals beneath her, the thunders of the heavens above, from foes without, and, perchance, mutiny within her bulwarks? Can we, among all the works of man, find a fitter emblem of human life itself, and especially of the career of a young girl launched for the first time into the ocean of life? Up to that moment she has hardly had an existence of her own—her least action, and her most important one, have been alike dictated by others: now she claims the privileges of womanhood—she has become her own mistress; she is fairly launched in her career. And how bright looks the ocean through which her course is to be steered! How

light her heart, how gay her thoughts as she prepares for her experimental trip:—

"And long with eye and heart as glad,
And brow as cloudless may she gaze,
Nor mark how Vice, like Virtue clad,
Walks Empress of the giddy maze!
How high a pitch bold Cunning tries,
And grasps pale Merit's plunder'd meed!
How low the head of Genius lies—
How long Affection's wounds may bleed!
How Avarice, for her idol, gold,
Will all the Life of life destroy;
How Envy sickens to behold
Another's peace, or hope, or joy.

* * * * *

May she the Heaven-sent gift receive,
Life's dangerous balance to adjust!
Not all that glitters, to believe!
Nor all that darkens, to distrust!"

True, her impulses are doubtless good; her intentions are upright—but with her intellect still immatured—her mind undeveloped, her principles far from defined or settled, how shall she escape the dangers that surround her?

Not less numerous, nor less deadly, are the perils which encompass her than those which environ her prototype.

She is indeed relieved from the strict guardianship of her instructors; she is no longer obliged to devote each hour to some given pursuit, according to their wishes;—she is, to a certain degree, a free agent. But, in leaving one school, she has but entered another, where her faults and foibles will be judged with infinitely more severity, and where she herself, instead of her teachers, will be responsible for whatever errors she may commit. In truth, the world is a school in which we are daily learning something and making some progress, either in good or in evil. It is too common for a young girl on leaving school to think that she has then completed her education, and that nothing more is required of her; that henceforth she may occupy or waste her time as she pleases; and that, in fact as well as in theory, she is her own mistress.

But a little serious thought and investigation will show us the fallacy of this idea. What is the probable destiny of a young girl? and how far does her school education fit her for that destiny? Let her ask herself these questions,

and she will soon feel that very much indeed remains in her own hands.

To become in course of time a wife and a mother, is, we may fairly assume, the ambition and expectation of every young woman. Whether this wish is destined to be realised or not; or whether its fulfilment is certain to render her happy; are questions which I do not at present intend to touch upon. But, inasmuch as this is at once the wish of all and the actual destiny of many, it is as well to ask ourselves what part of the education received in the schoolroom is calculated to fit us for the duties which the position of wife and mother entails.

Giving to accomplishments the precedence which they obtain in education, we will just ask of what use the amount acquired before leaving school is, to the woman at the head of a family. Really, to witness the indifference which girls exhibit about keeping up or increasing their knowledge of languages, music, drawing, &c., we should be justified in coming to the conclusion that they had no other object in studying them at school than to be able to say,

"I have learnt French," or "———— taught me the piano," and that it was to obtain this valuable result their parents had expended so much money, and perhaps submitted to many personal sacrifices. For the sake of playing in company, indeed, or to wile away an idle hour, a young lady will perhaps continue to practise on the piano, or she may even occasionally draw a landscape or paint a group of flowers; but these occupations are no longer regarded as duties, and by the time her knowledge would be valuable to her, to enable her to direct the education of her children or to amuse her husband, she has got so "out of practice" that she might as well never have learnt at all. Let her parents take her to France and Italy too, a year or so after she has left the schoolroom, and although her governess may have assured them that nothing but French was ever spoken, and that in Italian also she had the true "*parola Toscana, bocca Romana,*" yet it is a chance if they find her able to hold the simplest conversation with a native of either country, even if she can accurately give any order.

In geography, history, science, it is the same thing. In the course of a year or two she has forgotten nearly all she ever knew, and as far as any practical benefit to be derived from accomplishments, might as well never have been at school at all.

All this arises from the first error of supposing that her education is completed when she leaves school, when in fact it is but just commencing.

The object of the years passed in the schoolroom, of the studies pursued, and the discipline enforced, is not merely to pass those years without injury to ourselves or others, but to fit us to take the reins of government into our own hands, to teach, to improve, and to discipline ourselves.

When her studies come to be regarded in this light, and a girl on leaving the schoolroom sets herself seriously to consider what are her duties in her new position, and in what way she can put to the best account the acquirements of previous years, we may hope to see a race of women fitted for their destiny in life, regarding

every succeeding day and every talent as a trust committed to them for which they must give an account.

For it is not the *ignorance* of this or that branch of learning or language or art which constitutes the evil; it is the wasted time, the neglect of talent and opportunity. Nothing indeed should be begun without an aim; but, being begun, it should be steadily pursued as one of the regular duties of life. Each day a given period should be devoted to each study which has hitherto occupied you, so that at least you may retain all you have acquired at school, and make some progress towards further improvement. How most efficiently to pursue your studies by yourself will be the subject of future chapters; meantime, permit me to say something more of "life and its objects."

The cultivation of a woman's head is something,—the development of her heart is infinitely more important. She may dispense with every accomplishment in the education of her children, for she may find masters and teachers to impart them; but what can compensate for a

temper unregulated,—for a proud, revengeful spirit,—for habits of sloth and untidiness,—for rude or coarse manners, or a harsh and bitter tongue. And next to these in importance is a deficiency in household economy, in a knowledge of how to make home "the happiest place on earth" to her family. We smile at the ignorance of Dickens' "Dora," but how many young ladies marry with as little domestic knowledge, and perhaps also without that abundant stock of love on both sides, which would enable the husband to overlook his wife's blunders, and the wife to endeavour to correct them.

It may sound very refined to say, "Oh really I know nothing of household economy;" but be sure that the woman who is so ignorant has neglected one of the great duties of life.

> "To study household good,
> And good works in her husband to promote,
> Is woman's highest honour and her praise."

To cultivate the heart, the head, and the mind, is then the duty of every girl on leaving school. There is another thing I would suggest, and that is, to endeavour to form the cha-

racter. "Most women," it is said, "have no character at all," and the remark is true enough; for they are so apt, chameleon-like, to take the hue of whatever they are approximated to, that they really have no characteristic which marks them as individuals. And yet, as the life of woman is not always one of pleasure,—as she is called on both to do, and to bear the evils of life, —to toil for those dear to her,—to nurse them in the hour of sickness and of death,—to go through physical sufferings that would terrify the stoutest-hearted man, and endure trials before which he would shrink appalled,—is it not needful she should have some principle of action, some sustaining power, some watchword to her own heart? Our great families have their motto; our sovereign can appeal to "God and my right;" why should not we too adopt and act out some such device? What encouragement there is in *Essayez;* what a support in doubt and difficulty in "Je fais mon devoir;" what consolation and nerve we might find in "Crescit sub pondere virtus;" and could the most loving and anxious mother desire for her

child a motto more suggestive than "Fais ce que tu dois, advienne que pourra." Let us suppose the adoption of such a device, and how simple a solution it would offer to every difficulty or temptation. Shall I do this? Will it be advantageous? "Do what is right, come what come may." Who can calculate the influence on the life and destiny of a woman from some such phrase ever weighing on the mind!

I will give an illustration. Over the Weir at Sunderland there is a cast-iron bridge, bearing the motto, "Nil desperandum auspice Deo." A young girl walked over that bridge, and heard how the offer to place it there had been treated as an act of madness by the wiseacres of the town. Nevertheless, there was the noble bridge, spanning the broad river with its single arch, a standing monument that we need despair of nothing with God's favour. "Nil desperandum," she repeated to herself, as she returned home; "Nil desperandum shall be my motto;" for I should tell you that her life had been one of trial and vicissitude, and that difficulties of all sorts surrounded her path. For years of that

girl's life she was surrounded by trouble, and amongst them were some of the greatest that can fall the lot of woman. Many a time would she have given up the struggle between her and Fate; but still her eye would fall upon the seal which bore her motto, and in the darkest hour she was reminded, "Never despair." And years rolled on, and the firm faith and unremitting toil began to be crowned with success. She who had lost all that could make life dear was once again surrounded by smiling, loving faces, and the beauties and joys of home. There are some that are taught by fear, and some by love and gratitude. Perhaps she was of the latter number, for as her motto was still before her eyes, and she thought still more of the bridge at Sunderland, she began to consider how little she had deserved the blessings that had fallen to her lot; and still daily, more and more, she felt that Divine protection which had caused her "never to despair." "If I have succeeded it has been by God's blessing," became the one prominent thought of her heart, and her motto, no longer the barren "Nil

desperandum," now could not fail to remind her still to seek that blessing, without which, though long unthought of, she must years ago have sunk beneath her troubles. And Life is still before her, and none know what events it may bear upon its wings; but perhaps there is not one servant, or dependent, or friend, who does not feel, in all the transactions in which they come in contact, something of the same inspiriting motto which influences her own life. A happy day it was for her and for others when first she adopted the device—

"Nil desperandum auspice Deo."

And it should be the aim of every one in life to do all the good possible, with as little evil as may be. To all of us a certain influence is given, great or small, according to our position: to use that influence for good; to increase the happiness of others; to lighten the burden of the sorrowful; to sympathise in the joy of the happy; to live, in fact, for others, is the surest means of acquiring happiness ourselves. But

to do this we must discipline alike the head, the heart, and the mind, so that whatever our destiny, we may be found equal to it, and may be at once able and willing to "do our duty in that state of life to which it shall please God to call us."

CHAP. II.

THE IMPROVEMENT OF TIME.

"I asked an aged man, a man of cares,
Wrinkled, and curved, and white with hoary hairs;
'TIME is the warp of life,' he said. 'Oh, tell
The young, the gay, the fair, to weave it well.'
I asked the ancient, venerable dead,
Sages who wrote, and warriors who bled;
From the cold grave a hollow murmur flowed:
'Time sowed the seeds we reap in this abode.'
I asked a dying sinner, ere the tide
Of life had left his veins;—'TIME,' he replied,
'I've lost it! Ah, the treasure!' and he died.
I asked the golden sun and silver spheres,
Those bright chronometers of days and years.
They answered, '*Time* is but a meteor's glare,'
And bade us for Eternity prepare.
I asked the Seasons in their annual round,
That beautify or desolate the ground;
And they replied (no oracle more wise),
''Tis Folly's blank, but Wisdom's highest prize.''

WHATEVER our position in the world,—how poor or how exalted soever our parents,—we are every one of us endowed with one rich inheritance on our entrance into life, of which

no human being is able to deprive us. This gift, conferred on us by a beneficent Creator, for the happiness of others and for our own, is called "TIME." On ourselves it depends whether its possession be a source of happiness or of misery. True, to use it wisely, is to insure a large amount of all the best blessings of life; while to squander our rich patrimony is to court misery in this world, and to wholly unfit us for another.

We cannot overrate the value of Time, any more than we can compel its stay with us. Each night a certain amount of our whole allotted quantity has been withdrawn, and so much less is left for us to employ. *How much* may yet remain to us is uncertain; it is a problem no mortal can solve. Whether half a century or but half a minute remains to us we cannot tell. All that we do know is that the *present moment* is our own; our own, so far, that we have indeed the power to use or to abuse it as we please; but not our own, in that it is a loan, of which we must give a strict account to the lender. All that is certain about it is its utter uncer-

tainty! All that we know is, that we know nothing!

What a marvellous thing is TIME! A friend or an enemy—a blessing or a curse, according to our own appreciation of it. Uninfluenced by our wishes it marches onward, and we seek in vain to retard or to accelerate its footsteps. Nay, so strange are its ways, that whilst it appears to fly from those who would seek to lengthen its stay, it steals along with feet of lead from those who would fain give it wings.

Amidst all this uncertainty, however, one fact is indisputable—it is this, that for us, ere long, "TIME shall be no more;" that neither love, nor wealth, nor learning, nor any other thing that we either have or are, can restore to us one single moment which we have wasted, or lengthen our years when the hour of death has come.

How, then, shall we best use the fleeting hours? how improve to the greatest advantage the gift of Time? To the young especially this should be a matter for serious deliberation, since all they can hope to have or to be depends on

their improvement of time during the days of their youth. Indeed, its use or its neglect constitutes the difference between the happy and the unhappy, the successful and the unsuccessful, man or woman. From the girl who habitually wastes time, it is impossible to hope any good; for whatever her intellect or talents may be, unless her time is spent in improving them, she cannot attain to excellence. If she can dispense with personal exertion, as a matter of necessity, she still is a weariness to herself and to every one belonging to her. And if her circumstances be limited, and it be a duty for her to labour to save, if not to earn, it becomes still more serious; for if, in *all* instances it be true that "Idleness is the root of all evil," it is so most especially in the case of WOMAN. The love of ease, the want of the power and the habit of exerting herself, is the besetting sin which leads a woman into a thousand temptations. To her, it is, emphatically, the root of all evil.

Be sure, too, that she who habitually wastes time, the most precious thing she possesses, will not be economical of anything else; whilst

there never yet was found a person who systematically employed every hour of his days who did not ultimately succeed in any path of life he might have entered.

This value of time has been indeed a prominent characteristic of all our most eminent men and women. Sir Walter Scott, who used to write for hours before any of the rest of the family had risen, although *not* (as he himself said) without any one being the wiser; the Duke of Wellington, whose correspondence alone would have terrified half a dozen professed clerks; Elizabeth Smith, whose wonderful attainments never impeded the due performance of every domestic duty; Hannah More, Miss Edgeworth, and very many others might be cited, as instances of the possibility of performing a vast amount of labour without becoming a recluse, or neglecting any of the social duties of life, simply by using every minute for some purpose of business or pleasure.

If we have made up our minds to improve our own time to the utmost, the first thing to consider is, "What we have to do?" and then,

"When to do it?" Every day of our lives we have some duties to perform to our Creator, our fellow-creatures, and ourselves. Happily, these various duties are so united and interwoven, that even in performing any one with heart and soul, we are also performing the others. We rise in the morning, and surely we have some cause to thank our Maker if the night, so fraught with sorrow and suffering to many, has been passed by us in peace and safety; if another day is added to our lives; if our dear friends and relatives still surround us. With such thoughts in our hearts, we cannot but humbly and heartily thank God for these benefits and all others, and implore a continuance of them. These should be the first actions of the day. Then, if we have seen in our previous life errors which we would fain correct, if in the future we foresee difficulties to be overcome in which we need the counsel of one wiser than ourselves, where shall we find a solution of all doubts, counsel infinitely wise in all circumstances, save in the book which has been given us to be "a light to our feet and a lamp to our path." With

this view, we shall read a portion of the Bible every morning, not as a mere task, but that we may really find warning, counsel, and instruction in its pages. This will give us a sort of practical interest in what we read. Besides, it is singular how often, even in reading a certain portion regularly through, we find some verse peculiarly adapted to dispel some doubt, or direct in some difficulty at that moment weighing upon us. It is an excellent plan, and one recommended by the advice and practice of many admirable persons, to select a single verse in the morning as a sort of motto for the day, and to endeavour to carry out in every action of that day's life the precept it may contain. No one who has not faithfully tried this plan can appreciate the influences it has on the conduct. For instance, a young girl may read in the morning, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." She resolves as far as possible to act on this command. Her mamma, after breakfast, expresses a wish that she should undertake some duty not perhaps very agreeable to herself She feels inclined to substitute a pleasanter

occupation; but she recals her motto, "*Whatsoever* thy hand findeth to do, do it," and she is encouraged to persevere. By-and-by, perhaps, she finds herself falling into a fit of idleness, a musing on she knows not what, without aim or object; and she is beginning to relax in her exertions, when again she checks herself by thinking, "Well! this is not doing with *my might*."

We might picture to ourselves the good effect of many similar texts, such as "A soft answer turneth away wrath;" and we might see how its adoption by one member of the family group would tend to the happiness of all; but we all can supply, from our own memory, instances of misery resulting from the want of "the soft answer." I have given a hint for you to carry out, assured that you will find it one great means of self-improvement. For do not imagine that the strict following out of the text for that one day will be wholly without its effect in your after life. A tendency to indolence once subdued, a hasty answer suppressed, a temptation overcome, will make the next trial

far less painful. *Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte,* either in good or evil.

Whilst dressing in the morning, it will be wise to consider what your duties and occupations for the day will be; in what manner you can assist your mother in her domestic affairs, if such comes within your province; what demands there are upon your time, for business, improvement, or pleasure. The education your parents have given you has cost them much money, and perhaps they have made many sacrifices to afford you the advantages you have had: it is your duty to improve these advantages to the utmost, and a portion of every day ought to be sacredly devoted to keeping up your knowledge of languages and other accomplishments commenced in the schoolroom. Your family duties, of whatever kind, should claim another; needlework, exercise, society, charity,—all these will probably form some part of your day's duties; and whatever they may be, each should, as far as possible, have its own particular hour. Of course, the juniors of a family neither can nor ought to dictate hours in

any way. It is for them to take care they are not the cause of the household regulations being infringed; and by a very little careful management and forethought, they may maintain a certain exactitude themselves. Supposing, for example's sake, that the breakfast hour is not absolutely certain: that one of the principal members of the family is occasionally a quarter or half an hour late. How easy for the young ladies to have some small neat piece of work about, not easily spoiled by being kept in hand, to take up at the appointed breakfast hour, and put in their work-bags when the meal commences. Indeed, there are so many occasions when we are compelled to wait for some thing or person, that it is always wise to have some piece of work ready to take up at a moment's notice. None but those who have tried it can imagine how much may be done in this way.

But this, of course, is but the filling up of odd moments: the hours should be regularly portioned out for the more serious occupations. It will be found a golden rule to devote large [illegible] time to long works, and keep the

smaller spaces for that which can be performed in them. Now the reverse of this is the rule usually adopted by those who have not made it a study to put their time to the best use. A long rainy day comes; it is impossible to go out, and indoor exercise is not dreamed of (more of that by-and-by); so it is thought a piece of wise economy to devote the long morning to a "multitude of odd jobs," of which one, two, or three might have easily been completed in the odd half hours of ordinary days. So the time passes, and there is absolutely nothing to show for it: had it been steadily occupied in some one more important undertaking, there would, on the contrary, have been a visible progress made and the habit of close and lengthened attention would have been strengthened.

If it were a question of money instead of time, we should see the folly of the popular practice at once. The man who, having to pay one bill of £60, and a multitude of small items, should change his fifty-pound note to pay the trifles, and settle the large bill in small coin, would very justly be thought to have taken leave

of his senses; nor would the excuse that the fifty would not entirely pay the bill, be held a sufficient reason for his folly. Yet this is practically what nine out of ten do with what is infinitely more valuable than money, with time itself: the folly is to the full as great, but we do not think of it in that light. However, she who desires to make the most of her time will appropriate it on the same principle as she would her cash; she will keep long periods for the tedious or serious labours of life, and fill up with the lighter matters all the spare minutes or quarters of an hour.

In this way, too, many valuable works may be read, and progress made in many branches of study, during intervals which many young people utterly waste. We have only to ask ourselves at the end of a day, "What have I done since I rose this morning?" and to put down the time for which we can account, to find out how many hours of each day are entirely lost. It is an excellent check upon ourselves, to put down in th[illegible]fore leaving our bedroom wh[illegible]during the day; and

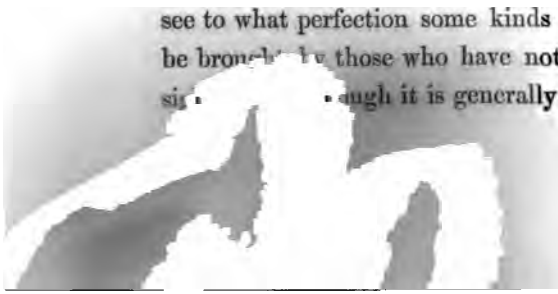
to examine the same list at night, to ascertain how far we have realised our wishes. Some interruptions, doubtless, have been unavoidable; but how much have we left unaccomplished, because this five minutes and that half hour have been idled away in doing nothing.

In forming the programme for the day's proceedings, however, two faults should be guarded against. To set ourselves, as a task, much *more* than we can possibly do, would be certain to end by our feeling disgusted at our own shortcomings; and perhaps the bravest spirit that ever beat in woman's breast would in time get depressed with the want of success. But it is a more fatal error still to fix our standard of excellence too low. The point we have in view should ever be an elevated one, and though we may not, and probably shall not attain it at first, yet we shall be conscious to that keen watch over ourselves which will make any trifling with TIME abhorrent to us. The very effort to attain to excellence will certainly impel us onward and upward.

Of course the daily duties of individuals must

vary with their individual circumstances. It would be impossible to prescribe them to all. For all, however, they will possess something of the same character. The young girl in her father's house will probably have some domestic duties; she will also have her own studies; the care of her wardrobe; her social engagements; the exercise necessary for her health and recreation. However various her occupations may be, she will find that, by a little careful management, there really is "a time for all things." She will observe, too, that the change from active employment to quiet study, or *vice versâ*, will be as great a relaxation as any one can desire, as well as a far pleasanter one than mere idleness.

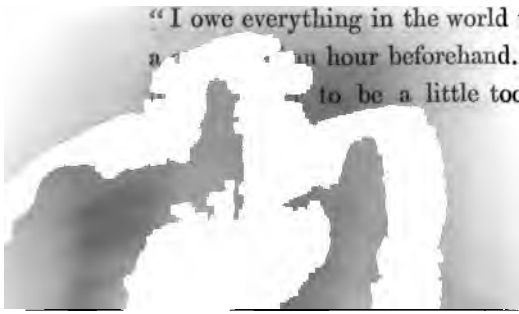
Whilst speaking of the value of Time, I cannot help suggesting the desirability of learning such arts as will prove a resource when sickness or age incapacitates from other employments. We have only to visit a school for the blind to see to what perfection some kinds of work can be brought by those who have not the gift of sight, though it is generally allowed that



the other senses of blind people acquire a keenness which ours cannot attain; yet, with due attention, we certainly might do much more than we do at present. Netting is a kind of work that will be found a valuable resource, when from any cause, our sight is not good. Knitting I should recommend still more earnestly; for, by a little careful practice, we may learn to do it so entirely without looking at it, that we may read even aloud whilst it busily employs our fingers. Nor let us think lightly of such an accomplishment. The value of any acquirement depends on the *use* to which we put it, and I have known this trifling art produce results the most gratifying. For instance, I once was acquainted with a lady whose income was wholly derived from her labours as a daily governess. I need not say it was no splendid one. Yet for founding a library for the working classes, in which she was much interested, her contribution was one that a countess would have thought munificent. It amounted to several pounds. In reply to a request for aid from some of the committee, she answered literally

in the words of the Bible: "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have, give;" and she offered to knit any quantity of collars, trimmings, &c., that they could dispose of. She was teaching from nine to six, and her evenings were occupied in study, but with her, knitting was so entirely mechanical that the most intricate pattern neither withdrew her attention nor her thoughts from their legitimate employment, and the result I have stated.

It is one of the duties we owe to ourselves and others to be *punctual* in every engagement we make. Nothing can more surely indicate the idler than the want of accuracy in our engagements; in young people especially, it marks a want of respect, also, for those above them; and, perhaps, more than any one other quality, will involve them in trouble and disgrace. "I will be there to the moment, my Lord," said a tradesman to Lord Nelson. "Be a quarter of an hour beforehand," replied that great man; "I owe everything in the world to being always a[illegible] an hour beforehand." It is always, [illegible] to be a little too soon for any



engagement or appointment. There is no need whatever that the time should be wasted. A lady's pocket will always hold a small piece of work, or a pocket edition of some good book, of which she may avail herself at such intervals; and if she values her time, she will not readily be without some such resource, as, unfortunately, she cannot reckon, perhaps, on equal punctuality in those she may be engaged to meet. It is unpardonable, however, to keep any one waiting; and the doing so arises more from a habit of dawdling, or from self-will, than perhaps we are aware of. A young lady is at the piano; a kind friend has promised to take her to some entertainment, and her mamma suggests that it is time she should prepare for the visit. "Oh, I may just as well finish this piece, mamma; I shall not be five minutes." Mamma concedes. The five minutes are unconsciously prolonged to ten; the friend arrives, and finds the young lady still in her morning dress; or is told that she "will be down directly; she has just gone up to put on her bonnet." Setting aside the irreverent habit of disputing her mo-

ther's wishes, she has shown great want of gratitude and respect for the friend who has been catering for her amusement, and has probably fussed and hurried herself into a fever; perhaps, too, she has forfeited any renewal of this same kind friend's offer. And why? Because she chose to put off a positive duty, and to waste the time of others as well as her own.

This last evil, arising from want of punctuality, is too serious to be overlooked in our discussion on the value of time. I remember being much struck with the reproof given by a lady of the Society of Friends to one of the members of a charitable committee, who entered the meeting-room a quarter of an hour after the time appointed. "Dost thou know how much time thou hast lost?" asked the Friend. "I am but a few minutes behindhand—not a quarter of an hour," said the delinquent, looking at her watch. "I beg thy pardon," replied the other; "thou hast not only lost thine own quarter of an hour,—which is an affair between thee and thy God,—but thou hast robbed each of us twelve of the same time. And what right

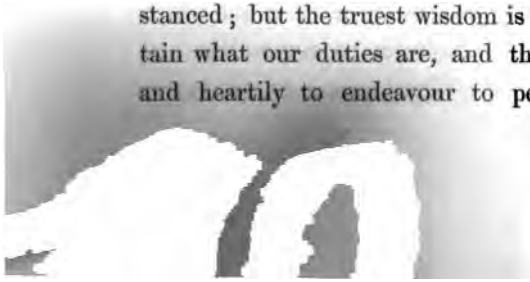
hadst thou to take from us what thou canst not restore?" It is indeed true, that the unpunctual person not only squanders the time intrusted to herself, but wastes that of others also.

If you would really improve your time, be very careful to be always *doing something*. It is not enough to be *intending* to do. "The fool," it is said, "talks of what he is going to do." The wise man will hardly mention what he has done. It is astonishing what a number of hours may be daily wasted in dreaming of setting about something. The only plan that will insure no waste of time is to assign a certain hour for every employment, and to go directly from one to another at that hour, without one moment's hesitation, taking, however, into that new occupation, all our thoughts, and energies, and heart.

But when we speak of putting all our heart and energies into our employment, let us also be sure that the occupation itself is one which is worthy of our destinies as responsible and immortal beings. Whatever can contribute

the happiness of others, or to our own improvement or pleasure, is an occupation in which we may safely engage; but there are some restless and ill-regulated minds that seek diversion in occupation, without the slightest thought as to its ultimate utility; that begin a number of things without finishing one; that exist in a perpetual state of weariness and excitement, without one wish or thought beyond that of "getting through the day." Noble ambition, truly, for a being to whom that day may be the last of her life! Such occupation as this does not deserve the name of industry. Such people have no idea of the value of Time.

To economise TIME, then, is to employ every moment judiciously, for some good and useful purpose; to be always actively employed in some pursuit worthy of us. What our engagements may be is nothing to the purpose. That which may be a waste of time in one girl, may be a duty in another who is differently circumstanced; but the truest wisdom is first to ascertain what our duties are, and then diligently and heartily to endeavour to perform them.

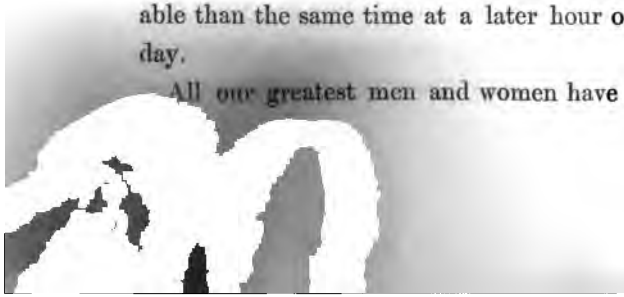


Nor should we retire to rest without a careful examination of ourselves and our actions, as compared with the resolutions of the morning. Without knowing our errors, how can we hope to correct them? without examining our hearts, how shall we see wherein we have done, or thought, or acted wrong, or in what we have accomplished our wishes? To know ourselves, with all our weaknesses and faults, is so essential, that it must be a part of our daily study; and this knowledge cannot fail to fill us with gratitude to our heavenly Father, and feelings of kindness and charity to our fellow-creatures.

It would be wrong to close this chapter on the importance of Time, and the use to be made of it, without adverting more particularly to the large amount that is daily wasted by late risers. Perhaps the great majority of young women rise an hour or two later than they ought to do, and than they would do if they studied even that which was most beneficial to their health; and the time thus lost amounts in a few years to a period of which they would indeed be frightened to think they had voluntarily robbed themselves.

Like all other habits, that of lying in bed late is one which it is difficult to overcome, especially in after life; it is therefore very unwise to acquire it on leaving school.

Indeed, the propensity to indulge in lying in bed late in the morning probably arises more from the contrast it affords to the discipline of school, than from any genuine love for bed. The remembrance that she has been obliged to rise at a certain hour, and the knowledge that she is now so far her own mistress that she can get up when she likes, induces a young girl to give way to this indolent habit. Perhaps, had she been taught to regard it as a privilege to be permitted to rise, she would not now enjoy this exercise of independence; but whatever the reason may be, it is truly to be lamented; for as the hours of sleep before midnight do more to restore the energies of the frame than any amount of rest after that time, so the period spent in study before noon is much more valuable than the same time at a later hour of the day.



All our greatest men and women have been

distinguished as early risers. The old Duke, we know, observed as an excuse for the narrowness of his bed, that "when a man began to turn in bed, it was time for him to turn out." And I think it was the great statesman, Fox, who, having an inveterate propensity to sleep, had some machinery arranged at the head of his bed, by which a basin placed there, and into which water flowed all night, was filled to overflowing in the morning, and insured him a spontaneous cold bath, if he did not rise at a given moment.

Wesley, for the greater part of his long life, rose at four o'clock in the morning; and we can hardly mention the name of one distinguished person whom we shall not discover to have been an early riser.

In later life, this habit, like all others, is difficult to acquire; but as few girls do not already possess it at the period of leaving the schoolroom, it is certainly a great pity that the excellent practice should fall into disuse merely from what we suspect to be a false notion of the luxury of independence; and those who

are young enough to have the probability of a long life before them, and who will trouble themselves to reckon by how much they will abridge it by rising for ten years at eight o'clock instead of six, will be too much startled by the result of their calculation to indulge a single day in so pernicious a practice.

CHAP. III.

READING AND WRITING.

"True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
As those walk easiest who have learned to dance.
* * * * *
"'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence,
The sound should seem an echo of the sense."—POPE.

"Speech makes a ready man, reading a full man, and writing a correct man."—LORD BACON.

FOLLOWING out the principle already laid down, that those accomplishments are the most excellent and most worthy of cultivation which contribute most largely to the happiness of others, I place that of reading well before every one of the arts which usually are so designated; and certainly had I the fairy's power to bestow on those I loved the gift which should most endear them to others—not of course including good principle, good sense, and good temper—I would give them the power of delighting their own family circle by reading and talking well. The former art especially is cultivated far too

little for the health as well as the happiness of young women; so much is it neglected, that probably twenty can sing pleasingly for every one that can read agreeably. Yet we cannot doubt that a voice for singing is comparatively rare, and that almost any one who chooses to do so can read so as to give pleasure. Perhaps there are two reasons for the general neglect of this charming accomplishment. In the first place, we are far too apt to cultivate most carefully that which is to please in society, and to neglect those arts which can contribute to domestic happiness; we sing for our acquaintances, to excite the admiration, or, it may be, the envy of people who see us but seldom, and would not greatly care if they never saw us again. But in being able to read well a good poem or play, or even the debates in parliament, we are only likely to give pleasure to an invalid father or brother, or perhaps a group of younger brothers and sisters. But to increase the happiness of but one of our own home circle ought to be a source of far more satisfaction to us than the applause of any stranger whatever. To wile

away the dreary hours of pain and sickness,—to charm a group of young listeners into forgetfulness of the rain or snow that is preventing them from enjoying their usual sports,—these are objects we can so easily attain, and from which we shall derive such real happiness, that they are well worth a little effort. I say nothing of the enlargement of our own minds, and the amount of knowledge that may be diffused through the medium of the daughters in a family when they are good readers; but I would earnestly advise the careful cultivation of the voice simply as one of the greatest sources of family union and home happiness that we are privileged to possess. I have heard, indeed, another cause for the neglect of this accomplishment, which, were it not gravely stated, would be utterly beyond credibility. It is said to be bold and unfeminine to have sufficient presence of mind to read to a family or friendly circle, although apparently there is nothing at all unfeminine or derogatory to the modesty of our sex in singing in the largest and most mixed company, even when the words of our songs may be anything but

such as we should feel comfortable in repeating without music. A moment's reflection must show that this excuse has not a shadow of reason in it. Like every other gift, a fine voice for reading may be made subservient to vanity and folly, but it is far less liable to be so misused than any other. It is not displayed to strangers, like singing; it is not capable of being made a medium of deception, like drawing; it has all the advantages of other accomplishments as sources of pleasure to ourselves and others, with fewer drawbacks than any other possesses. Then, like all the purest pleasures, it is placed within the reach of all. A piano may, from many causes, be out of our power, or the noise of it, even in another room, may be an annoyance to some one; and we may be without some requisites for drawing, even if we have a taste for the art, which after all is rather a selfish one; but with books at hand, we can enjoy ourselves and make others happy without giving offence to any. But we must read well if we would give pleasure. Nothing is so wearisome as a bad reader. Miss Hannah More says that

"to read so as not to be understood, and to write so as not to be read, are among the minor immoralities of life." The first requisite is to read distinctly, and pronounce every word duly. There should be no appearance of effort, or it becomes painful to the listener; and if there is really much effort, it is painful to the reader. We should read from the chest, with the head erect and the shoulders thrown back. The book should be held so as to be easily seen without stooping. So much for the attitude. To read well, however, is an art requiring both study and practice. Where it has been neglected in the schoolroom, lessons should be taken of a good professor of elocution, and no opportunity should be omitted of hearing good readers or speakers. Anything like a theatrical display should indeed be avoided with the utmost care; but still the voice must be trained to vary itself with the subject. To read in the same tone such a piece as "The Battle of Ivry," and Cowper's lines addressed to his "Mother's Picture," would be such a gross violation of nature, as we should all recognise at once. But between these two extremes there

are many nice shades of error which it needs an artist's ear to detect. Nature herself must be the basis of all rules of art. The tones in which an actual conversation would occur must be proper for the same conversation if we are reading it in a novel. In moments of excitement, whether from joy, or sorrow, or danger, or any other cause, we should speak with a rapidity which would be quite foreign to us were we in ordinary circumstances or relating a commonplace occurrence. Words of love and fondness would not be uttered with the same accents as the ejaculations of hatred or despair; and our caressing tone to an infant would differ widely from the respectful manner and voice with which we should address an elder. We have only to watch ourselves and others to see of what an infinite variety of tones the human voice is capable. Having noticed this, it becomes a high art to so control and cultivate the voice as to produce these modulations at will. To do this must be a subject of study, either with or without a master, as circumstances may happen; but two sisters would find it add much to their

enjoyment of a walk, to occupy themselves in discussing the proper tones in which such or such a speech should be given, or such a poem read. It would lead to an analysis of the spirit and scope of the work, and make them better acquainted with it than any mere reading will ever do.

Nor must it be forgotten that the exercise of the lungs, which we are recommending, is highly conducive to health. Like every other part of our frames, the lungs require free play for the full development of their powers; and they will become more capable of exertion just in proportion as their powers are continually but judiciously exercised. To a person unaccustomed to read aloud, a single hour's lecture will be very fatiguing; but after a few days' regular exertion, the power will be so increased that double that time will produce no weariness. It is of great importance, however, to respire properly. The lungs should inhale as much as they can at each breath, especially at all the pauses. Nothing can be more unpleasant in either a speaker or a reader than a low, rapid,

monotonous "gabble," varied only by an hysteric catch in the breath.

Some people are constitutionally short-breathed, but with many young people it is a mere habit, and a very disagreeable one. Should it be even a natural defect, it can be in a great measure remedied by judiciously exercising the voice in the open air, especially when ascending a hill. For this purpose, recitation is better than conversation, as giving more scope for declamatory power. Any of the grand and beautiful speeches which we find in every one of Shakspeare's plays, or passages out of any other favourite poet, will form an admirable exercise. Whilst on the subject of recitation, I cannot help regretting that so many neglect to store their memory with the gems of our poetry in their youth, as by doing so they would provide a store of amusement and interest for themselves and others in after years, besides greatly strengthening the memory. Most girls profess to be "passionately fond of poetry;" and yet I fear very few are sufficiently acquainted with the works of any one even of our own poets to be able

to recall the exact words of any passage even of the most popular writer. Those, however, who have learnt by heart a good deal of the choicest of our poetry, feel that they have, in doing so, accumulated sources of interest and pleasure for many a weary hour of sickness or of mechanical employment. Indeed, it is so great a pleasure to be able to recall at will the gems of our literature, that I am persuaded no one who thought about the matter would neglect voluntarily such a source of happiness. Poetry, indeed, can be learned in odd minutes,—from an open book while working, or whilst brushing the hair at night, or at many other periods that are too often wasted. "But I have no memory," I think I hear some one say. Translated, the phrase usually means, "I do not think it worth while to try to remember;" for we may remark we all have sufficient memory for anything that closely concerns our own interests. Undoubtedly, some women are naturally blessed with a stronger memory than others; but it is always in our own power to improve it, and if we are conscious of a defi-

ciency, it should only make us more anxious to strengthen our memory, as we shall surely do, by steadily and gradually increasing our demands upon it. Close and fixed attention to the subject in hand, whilst it remains before them, is perhaps the grand secret of those who distinguish themselves by the power of their memory. It is no effort of GENIUS to be able to report a sermon or a speech without notes; it is simply the effect of giving undivided attention during its delivery. Let the experiment be fairly tried, and I doubt not the result will prove that there is no *magic* whatever in having a good memory.

But, whilst urging you to store your minds with poetry, sacred and profane, I should cruelly neglect my duty if I failed to counsel you to avail yourself of your youthful days to acquire such a knowledge of the sacred volume as will form a resource when you may be unable to read it for yourself or others. To all of us come periods of sickness and of affliction, when we are unable to read, or perhaps to bear the sound of a voice, when yet it would be an infinite blessing to be able to recall the very words of

love and mercy with which our Bible abounds. It is in the season of youth and health that such stores of comfort should be acquired; and certainly no day should be allowed to pass by any young girl, without her having made some addition to her Biblical knowledge. A single verse a day will make nearly four hundred in the year; and by recalling on the Sunday what we have learned in the week, we shall keep up our remembrance of what we have once acquired. This is a sort of learning we shall certainly never regret.

With regard to the books to be selected for private reading, much must depend on our position in life. Those who have few or no active domestic duties, can give, and will probably be expected to give, a larger portion of their time to reading than those differently circumstanced. But it is of the greatest importance that books, whether few or many, should be *well chosen*, and *well read*. Books are like people. Some should be minutely studied; some may be just glanced through; but every one should leave a certain *definite* impression on the mind. If we go

through a book without learning *something* from it, we have thrown away our time. How then are we to ascertain that we have read to a purpose? I would earnestly advise every young lady leaving school to resolve to read no work without entering its name, and some particulars respecting it, in a book to be kept for that purpose. I say *every* book, for the most trivial ought to teach us some lesson of morals or manners; to confirm or alter some opinion; or it must be indeed a useless book. I do not suggest an elaborate analysis of everything we read, but merely a *resumé*, or a sort of catalogue *raisonée*, of novels, plays, and light reading generally, with extracts of any sentiment or speech which may particularly strike us. But all history should be read with great care, and an abstract, however short, made of it daily. We should avail ourselves of the comparatively leisure years of early womanhood to read the sterling histories of our own and other nations. Whenever we can do so, we should obtain contemporaneous histories, by writers of opposite principles; and, by reading both, we should

avoid the folly of arguing from a one-sided view of facts. This is not merely desirable for the sake of acquiring a correct knowledge of events; it will also prevent our indulging in those bitter feelings and violent invectives which arise from ignorance of what may be said of the other side of a question. For every question, like every coin, has two sides, and much ill feeling would be avoided if all parties would fairly examine them. For instance: our Protestant histories of England speak strongly of the cruelties exercised by Queen Mary on her reformed subjects, but they totally overlook the equal atrocities perpetrated by her sister Elizabeth, on the Roman Catholics. This is not very fair, perhaps, but it is natural. If we only read one of those histories, it is, of course, the one which is on the side of our own faith, and we think we have an excellent proof of the crimes of the opposite party. But when we see both sides of the question, we find out how little real religion had to do with the crimes for which it was made a cloak, and we arrive at such a knowledge of the truth as may not only teach us the history

of past ages, but furnish us with a hint for our future guidance in many a difficulty.

Whenever a book of history or travels is opened, a geography and atlas should also find a place on our study table. The places mentioned should be found, and every addition to our geographical knowledge noted. In our abstract of what we read, all discrepancies between the various authors should be remarked, and we should endeavour to see how far the variation arises from the peculiar character of the writers themselves, and how far they have authority for their opinion.

Biographies of eminent individuals also form a particularly useful study; and, if possible, they should always be taken in conjunction with the works of such as are authors. No life should ever be read without a summary of the character being written, not at the moment of completing the book, but after an interval of at least a day, and a period of careful consideration. For instance, after completing a biography, avail yourself of a solitary walk, or a task of needlework, to deliberately recall all the lead-

ing incidents and traits of character; think where the individual in question erred, and why, —and what result the error produced; examine in the same way all the good points, and draw as just a balance as you can. Commit your judgment to writing, either elaborately, or as a brief abstract; and you will have the satisfaction of finding you have been exercising at the same time all the best faculties of your mind,—reason, judgment, memory,—as well as improving yourself in composition, and materially adding to your knowledge. For it is not *what* we read, but *how* we read, that makes us learned, or leaves us ignorant. In reading, more than in anything else, quality is of more consequence than quantity.

Works of fiction form, very naturally, the favourite part of the library of the young; for at the age when imagination is the most active and powerful faculty of the mind, they possess charms which we should seek in vain in Rollin or Hume. But this appetite, like that of a child for cakes, must be restrained within due bounds, or it will be injurious. No pastry will

ever be a proper substitute for a solid joint; and the best novels that ever were written would not be suitable as the *only*, or even the principal study of a young girl. Novels should be kept as a relaxation from study, or a source of amusement during temporary indisposition. And nothing should induce a daughter to read such as are not sanctioned by her mother. Many are indeed excellent and unobjectionable *as amusements;* and, in the present day especially, we have several writers whose works will at once delight and instruct the reader. But how are you to choose these books, supposing that mamma leaves you in such matters to your own guidance. Let *one* book by any given author afford us, on analysis, a good lesson, and we may fairly believe that another by the same writer will not be objectionable. Take "Emelia Wyndham" as an example. The result of this novel on the mind will probably be the conviction that happiness will always, sooner or later, result from a steady adherence to the path of duty, however much that path may at first seem beset with thorns. Well, this lesson, laid to

heart and *acted out*, will prove valuable to us in many a difficulty; and if we have learnt it from reading a novel, that novel was neither read nor written in vain.

The works of the author of "Olive" (Miss Mulock) are all excellent; and "Lydia," a WOMAN'S book, by Mrs. Newton Crosland, is a book every woman should read. Nor must I forget the "Lives of Memorable Women," by the same truly clear-headed and warm-hearted authoress. In elevating our sex in our own eyes, this work will stimulate us to emulate the virtues of those who have done so much honour to it.

To give a list of works to be read would be clearly impossible, within the limits of a book like this. I can only advise in general terms—

1st. To avoid all "Compendiums," "Selections," "Abstracts," and "Beauties," as you would avoid the plague or the cholera. They form a royal road to ignorance and self-conceit instead of knowledge.

2nd. Having begun a book, read it through. Master its contents, and do not be satisfied

without having learnt something from the perusal.

3rd. Give your whole attention to every work while you are engaged on it.

Follow out these rules, and you will read to some purpose.

Of course, whilst it is optional to read many works, there are some of which it would be disgraceful to be ignorant. Such are the

> Historians, bards, and orators sublime,
> Land-marks eternal on the shores of Time,

whose works are to be found in every library. That grand old Greek, Plutarch, is perhaps the most profoundly interesting of all historians (for his biographies clearly belong to history); then Rollin, Gibbon, Hume and Smollett, Lingard, and Robertson. Not to know these would be indeed to argue yourselves unknown. And who would acknowledge that they were ignorant of Shakspere? (Bowdler's edition is the best) Who has not read the romances and poems of Scott, or Miss Edgeworth's admirable tales, or enjoyed the immortal "Vicar of Wakefield," or sighed over "[redacted]?" But few works ever gave me

more intense pleasure than "Boswell's Life of Johnson," a work which not only shows us the great lexicographer as he was, with all his greatness and all his failings, but also introduces us to the intimate acquaintance of all the great men of that period. Truly there were giants on the earth in those days! Another favourite book of mine, I remember, was Adam Clark's "Lives of the Wesley Family." It is years since I saw it, but I can still recall the interest with which I read the histories of the members of that remarkable family. The "Spectator," too, was in my girlish days a source of great enjoyment. Cowper's letters and poems were also very great favourites; and the old poets, Spencer especially, I delighted in. I say nothing of Milton, or rather of "Paradise Lost," for I suspect I am not the only person who read it *as a duty*. Passages there are which must delight every one; but, as a whole, it is probably "caviar to the general," as it was to me. It is a study for maturer years than those I am supposing my friends to possess.

So intimately are reading and composition

connected, that they can hardly be considered distinctly. In the course of my observations on books, I have suggested plans which must materially improve the mental powers, and will, as that of expressing thought; but a few words more may not be misplaced.

The most general exercise of a young lady's pen is in her correspondence with friends, or with absent members of her family. On leaving the schoolroom this correspondence begins, not unfrequently with requests from her immediate associates, and perhaps with others with whom she has had really no intimacy, with "You'll write to me, won't you, there's a dear?" or "Now, mind; I shall expect to hear from you every week; be sure you write to me!" and a young girl becomes involved in an extensive correspondence before she knows the value of the time she is throwing away; for it is, in most cases, utterly thrown away. Few schoolgirl friendships endure for any long period after the parties are separated; nor is it desirable that they should, unless they have some more solid foundation than mere propinquity. Of

course I am not objecting to occasional letters of kind inquiry, but to a regular and settled correspondence, involving the loss of a vast amount of time, to say nothing of money. For whilst an interchange of letters with a person of superior mind and greater experience of the world, is as great an advantage as a young girl can have, the silly chit-chat, and often the pernicious gossiping, in which young girls indulge, is a serious evil. For, unfortunately, people instead of things are too often discussed in such letters, and remarks are made in a spirit of fun or mischief, which may leave or create a bad impression. Sometimes satire is indulged in, under the idea that it is wit; and slander is circulated almost unintentionally,—certainly without a single thought of the consequences.

In all correspondence with your young friends, then, you should endeavour to write about things rather than people; and if you mention the latter at all, to guard against repeating any tale of slander or detraction. Be on your guard, too, against *flattering*, or being flattered, in your correspondence. No real

friend will speak to you more warmly than she feels, or will praise you when your own conscience tells you you deserve blame.

But seek, if possible, to establish a correspondence with those who are your superiors in years, or knowledge, or both; and if you would be a good letter writer, study the best models, and *practise* the art carefully. Among the most charming letters in the world are the poet Cowper's. As specimens of taste and wit, Lady Mary Wortley Montague's are unrivalled; but in her brilliancy she sometimes forgets her womanhood,—an error by which she loses half her charms. Lord Collingwood's correspondence is extremely interesting; and there are hundreds of admirable volumes of letters, which will assist you in forming your style and guiding your task. But to write a good letter, you must have something to write about; and remember, that out of an empty vase can come no water. If you have not cultivated both your head and your heart, your letters can contain little to make them worthy of being read, even by a partial friend. Young girls find a

difficulty in writing letters, because they do not clearly understand, or do not remember, that epistles to absent friends are but substitutes for personal intercourse, and that, therefore, whatever topics would be likely to be discussed in conversation with a person, are fit subjects for the pen. It is from not reflecting on this fact that young ladies so often say, "Well, I really do not know what to say," even if writing to a parent or a brother, as they would certainly find something to say were they in the presence of the same relations.

To write a letter well is, however, a high art, and may be considered one of the most charming accomplishments of a woman. The first point to be considered is *legibility*. Nothing can be more annoying than to receive a letter which it is impossible to decipher. If from one we love, it is an act of cruelty; if from a stranger, an unpardonable impertinence. Some people, indeed, seem to forget that they write for the benefit of others; and it was once my fate to hear a hieroglyphic hand justified, as being intended only for the benefit of the

writer! Certainly, he was the only person likely to be benefited by it. As a rule, therefore, we should be careful to write legibly.

The next point is, to omit no topic that it is desirable to mention; and to give clear replies to all the queries of your correspondent. Even the most unimportant letter should be the subject of some slight consideration before we take a pen in hand. A little mental arrangement of the subjects on which we are to write, will enable us to discuss each in its order, and to omit none. Replies to any inquiries of our correspondent, or what we may properly term the *answer* to her letter, should be the opening part of our own; then any other topic which we may wish to introduce, concluding with messages of affection, &c. We should endeavour to write, at all times, such a letter as shall gratify our correspondent, and show that her tastes and peculiarities are remembered by us. To the tried friends of childhood, of whose warm and disinterested affection for us we are well assured, we may venture to write much of ourselves; for they will be gratified by our frank-

ness and confidence. But it betrays great vanity and egotism to make our own sayings or doings the burden of a letter to a comparative stranger. Every letter should be duly dated, and also bear the name and address of the person for whom it is intended; at the end, if a letter of friendship, and immediately below the date if a letter of business, or to a stranger, thus:—

No. —— Rue St. Honoré,
Paris,
April 27th, 1854.

Messrs. Darton & Co.

Gentlemen,

The mention of a publisher's name reminds me of the vast and frequently absurd correspondence with which many editors are tormented. To be able to obtain from the head of a popular journal information on any topic, is a privilege which should be too highly valued to be abused, as it too frequently is. One had need be the recipient of such letters for a week to believe what a mass of trash is perpetrated apparently only to increase the revenue; it certainly can answer no other end. Questions the most trivial

or abstruse are unhesitatingly submitted to the journalist: aid is asked in obtaining employment, in a way that really reads more like a command than a request; and pages are filled up with details of private matters with which the poor editor can have neither concern nor interest. If you have occasion to write to any one whose public situation must involve a large correspondence, attend to two or three common-sense rules.

Put no query for which you can readily obtain a reply elsewhere.

Ask every question in the fewest possible words.

Begin each new subject on a fresh line, and a little within the edge of the paper. Write clearly, and on no account cross your letter.

If a private answer is desired, inclose a stamped addressed envelope.

Lastly, remember you are asking a favour of a stranger, and couch your letter in simple and respectful terms. For a young lady, in sober earnest, to write a long rigmarole to a person she never saw, sign herself "Your affectionate Miss Smith," and expect a reply, is to exhibit

an amount of insolence that is only exceeded by her ignorance.

To write a long or a crossed letter, is almost to insure its being thrown into the fire; and to expect an answer without defraying the expenses is most unjust. True, postage is only one penny, and perhaps paper and envelope another; but you have no right to charge a stranger with even that expense for you, in addition to the trouble of writing. And consider what a sum it would amount to, were every one of an editor's correspondents to do the same. Supposing that twelve persons only were to write daily to the editor of a popular periodical, (a very low average,) he would be taxed by his fair correspondents at least twenty pounds a year! Besides, it is the rule with many people to reply to no queries from strangers, when the wherewithal is not provided for doing so; therefore, as a matter of prudence, as well as honesty, it is advisable to follow this advice.

It can scarcely be necessary to comment on the ignorance displayed by those who begin a letter in one person, and end it in another; a

moment's thought will show a writer that she makes nonsense of her letter by such a blunder. When a note is begun in the third person: "Miss James will be obliged by Messrs. Sowerby & Co., &c.," there is no necessity for any termination; and for a short note to strangers or tradespeople, this form is very appropriate. But if the note is likely to be a long one, it is better to adopt the more general mode, beginning "Madam," or "Sir," because in the other way you have to speak of two different parties in the third person, and it is apt to produce confusion. Everything that is likely to cause ambiguity in written communications should be carefully avoided. Letters that commence with "Madam," or "Sir," should have as a termination

I am, or I remain,
Sir (or Madam),
Yours respectfully, or yours obediently, to superiors; to equals "yours faithfully." Yours truly, or yours sincerely, will be in character with "Dear Madam," or "Dear Sir;" the adverbs *very*, and *most*, imply greater intimacy, and are appropriate with "My dear Miss So-and-so,"

or "My dear Madam;" and your own feelings will indicate when more affectionate expressions may properly be used. But beware of exaggerated expressions, as well as of committing to paper any sentiments which are likely to be misconstrued, remembering that whilst the meaning of spoken words is frequently even contradicted by the look or tone that accompanies them, such as are written cannot be explained away, but must bear any interpretation the readers may put upon them.

Before closing the subject of letter writing, a few words on the fitting up of a young lady's desk may not be inappropriate. It should contain everything that can be necessary for writing: letter and note-paper, envelopes of various sizes, pens, penholders, pencils, knife and paper-cutter, blotting-paper, ink, in a stand which is not liable to be upset; sealing-wax, in small round sticks, as these are much nicer for making a neat seal than the flat ones; a small box of postage stamps, wafers, and seals. India-rubber bands are also extremely useful for keeping letters, accounts, and papers together; and a small

india-rubber slate, with a pencil attached, will be found an excellent addition to the usual contents of a desk, especially for those who are anxious to attain a good style of composition.

On the subject of keeping letters, there are various opinions; much must depend on the nature of our correspondence and the frequency of communication; but I think it is better, as a general rule, to destroy all ordinary letters when they have been answered, than to accumulate a quantity of written paper which will some day, almost certainly, be looked over with indifference. There are, indeed, some letters which should be guarded among our dearest treasures —letters of absent parents, and others similarly interesting; but, considering how uncertain life is, it is seldom wise to retain the letters of friends after the interest they have excited has died away. We can hardly insure that they may not be seen by those whose criticism would not be desired by the writers, and perhaps produce misunderstandings between friends; for remember, so influenced are we naturally by the peculiarities of the person with whom we are asso-

ciating at the moment, that it is almost certain everything we say or write to that person will in some degree take its tone from the influence of her mind; and we should feel the same words unsuitable for another person, for whom we might yet feel an equal affection. It is better, therefore, to burn at the end of every year all unimportant letters received in it, and to request our own letters may be treated in the same way. Let me add, that no correspondence should be entered into by a young girl without the sanction of her best friend—her mother; nor should it be carried on, if it ever becomes of such a nature that she would not like her mother to see it. No loving mother will object to the innocent amusement of her child; and be sure, if you feel you would rather not show your parent the letter of your friend, there is something in it which should never have been written. Always refuse to be a party to anything clandestine; and save yourself from the temptation to become privy to a secret by letting it be known your mother is so much your friend you have no concealments from her.

Whilst being studious not to be compromised by the folly of others, be very careful what you yourself write concerning any one. If it be necessary for a Christian to set a watch at the door of her lips, be sure it is still more important for her to guard her pen; for words may be forgotten, a harsh speech may be excused on the ground of momentary anger, but a written judgment remains; and, if we allow ourselves to comment on others in an undue manner, we are almost certain to live to regret our error, not however before some irreparable mischief is committed. It is wise, therefore, to say nothing of any one, in our most private letter, that we should not like to have repeated; and, as a general rule, it is better to talk of things than of persons. Beware of giving way to a propensity to gossip; it will make you odious as a young woman, and deprive you in old age of every title to respect.

The details of folding, sealing, and directing a letter are by no means beneath the attention of a lady, since strangers will judge of her character by the appearance of her letters. Besides

this, it should be a woman's aim to do everything, no matter how trivial, in the best possible manner. If a thing is worth doing at all, it is worth doing well. The universal introduction of envelopes has obviated much of the difficulty that used to exist in folding a letter neatly; but even now we see sheets of paper that have been twice folded, because the first arrangement would not admit of their being placed in the envelope. The usual way of folding note-paper is to double it first in the length, and then in the breadth. French envelopes, which are long and narrow, require the paper to be folded in four in the width. Sealing-wax is comparatively little used now; but we can never consider an adhesive envelope an elegant thing, although we may allow it to be a convenient one. The address should be extremely clear, as should also the place of your own residence; for I have known some hundreds of letters which could not be answered, because the name and address of the writer were illegible; and, as a last resource, I have cut out the name and address, and gummed them on the envelope, trusting that the magical

skill of the "Blind Clerk," at the General Post Office, might enable him to decipher a name which was quite beyond my comprehension.

To conclude this subject, I will say a few words more on composition. Poets, indeed, may be "born, not made," according to the old proverb; but for all writers study does as much as genius. Hear what one of the greatest authors of modern times (Sir E. Bulwer Lytton) says on this point—"I am no believer in genius without labour; but I do believe that labour, continuously and judiciously applied, becomes genius in itself." If such a man has had to toil to attain excellence, what must humbler individuals do?

There are two kinds of exercise for your pen, if you wish to become a good writer: you must learn to condense and to amplify. To condense is to give the substance of any narrative or event in the fewest words possible, without in any degree altering the sense. The other process is that by which we enlarge on a history, or a sentiment, still retaining its leading features in all their integrity. These exercises will lead you

to criticise all your words carefully, that you may not unthinkingly use one which does not convey the right impression. Exercises in original composition are also very desirable; and careful attempts at criticism will improve your judgment as well as your style. The notices I have already advised you to give of the books you read, will prepare you for more elaborate critiques. Any new work which is much talked of will be an admirable study for you, as you will probably hear it discussed by those who are more capable of appreciating its merits; and, at any rate, the monthly reviews will be sure to have notices of it, which you may compare with your own, and thus learn to form your judgment and your taste. Do not, however, be ashamed of differing even from a professed critic; rather examine the ground of his opinion, and see whether you are yourself in error or not. Editors are but fallible mortals, like other people; and no rational being should pin her faith on any other person's sleeve. Let your object be, *not to prove yourself right*, but to exercise your powers and enlarge your mind.

CHAP. IV.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

"But 'tis not timber, lead, or stone,
The architect requires alone,
To finish a fine building;
The palace were but half complete,
If he could possibly forget
The carving and the gilding."—COWPER.

"So many more languages a man hath, by so many more times is he a man."—BACON.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS are to the more solid parts of education, what a handsome frame is to a good picture: they add to the beauty and perfection of the character,—where it possesses something yet more beautiful in solid acquirements of mind, and graces of heart. But where they are the *best* parts of a girl's education, they lose half even of their beauty, and almost all of their value.

Not for a moment would I undervalue any accomplishment; every art, every language,

every acquirement of whatever sort, is valuable to a woman; not only because it gives her occupation and home enjoyment, but also because it is another security against misfortune. But, then, every accomplishment we begin must be carried out to some definite purpose; which at present is far from being the case. Take, for instance, Drawing. Every schoolgirl learns drawing, and produces extraordinary landscapes and crayon heads on her return from school, and her parents pay the bill and have the drawings framed;—and there, I am afraid, is an end of the matter. But ought hour after hour, year after year, to be spent to no practical purpose? Is it fit or reasonable that a girl should put her parents to so much expense, and lose her own precious time, merely to say she *has* done so and so, whilst she could not draw an animal for her little brother, or sketch a design for a table for her father, or tell the difference between the forms of an oak and an elm, if the originals were not before her? Has the Almighty given us TIME to be so frittered away? Certainly not.

What is the error, then? It is not our knowledge, but our want of knowledge, with which I am finding fault. We begin a good many things just where we should leave them off; we practise detail when we should study principle: hence we are puzzled whenever a subject demands a knowledge of general principles.

Drawing, to be useful, must be taught and learnt in a very different way. A knowledge of the rules of proportion, of light and shadow, of the principles of colouring, of geometry; these should be the subjects of a course of lessons in drawing. As it is, nothing is really known; and were a party of young people recently from school asked by what rule they would effect the arrangement of a group of haymakers in a field, so that they should all appear to be at different distances, hardly one out of the number could reply. Yet a knowledge of drawing is essential to every educated being; and, doubtless, as Art progresses and people begin to understand what education means, it will become a part of the lessons [illegible] ary village school. May we speedily [illegible] vent of that day. Meantime let

every one mend one, and the world will soon improve. Draw the simplest forms—cubes and such things—and avail yourself of all the *good* instruction you can; but draw from nature, or from good studies, and remember that Giotto, when he sketched a circle with charcoal on a bit of paper, considered he had given sufficient evidence of his capacity for the greatest works.

Languages, like drawing, are apt to be learnt as a task, and dismissed afterwards from the memory. With regard to the study of them, a great advance has doubtless taken place during the last few years; but that much remains to be done we may feel well assured, when we read the extraordinary *translations* of French tales which have appeared, and find a translator for the press rendering "*un particulier*" into "a particular person."

In our study of languages, we must not forget that until we can *think* in them we are not proficient. I believe a better system is now in vogue, and by the aid of De Porquet, and other good scholastic writers, linguists are really made; but still girls are too much engaged in rendering

French into English, instead of English into French. To remedy this, make it a habit daily to translate from English into French, and select, for such exercises, the most colloquial parts of a story, play, or other work. Scientific and professional works are extremely useful in this respect; as, by the study of them, we become acquainted with technical terms which otherwise would hardly occur in any lesson. Translations of our own authors by good foreign writers are valuable as keys to those who wish to improve themselves without the aid of masters. If, for instance, you can procure a translation of "Waverley," and you take it also for your own study, by comparing your translation with the Frenchman's, you will detect your errors, and arrive at an excellent knowledge of the language. But, in this unassisted study, be sure to transcribe every technical and idiomatic phrase, and not only learn it by heart, but construct a dialogue for yourself in which it shall occur.

A knowledge of French verbs I will suppose you to have thoroughly acquired at school; but, as I have found even good scholars puzzled by

the genders, I will transcribe some very simple tables I once furnished for the use of my own pupils.

Of course, as a general rule, among all living creatures the males are masculine, and the females feminine; but there are reptiles, fishes, insects, and even wild birds and beasts, in which no distinction is made between the genders, which are decided only by the termination, thus:—

MASCULINE TERMINATIONS.

All words are masculine ending in—

Rule.	*Exception.*
a	none.
i	foi, loi, merci, fourmi.
o	none.
u	eau, peau, vertu, glu, tribu.
é (when not preceded by t)	none.
ême	crême.
ôme	none.
isme	„
age	cage, image, page, rage.
ege	none.
uge	„
acle	„
aume	„
ire	„
re	gloire, memoire, poire, recloire, histoire, nageoire, passoire.

All nouns which end in any consonant, except *x, ion, eur*, or *son*, preceded by a vowel.

Consonant.	*Exceptions.*
	brebis, chair, clef, cour, cuiller, cuisson, dent, boisson, dot, façon, faim, fin, fois, forêt, hart, leçon, main, mer, moisson, mort, mousson, nef, necit, part, rançon, souris, tour, vis.

Maman (mamma), ending with a consonant, is feminine as following the first general rule.

Finally, all trees, and all adjectives and verbs used as substantives, are masculine.

Feminine—All nouns ending in *x, eur*, and *ion*, or *son*, preceded by a vowel, are feminine.

Rule.	*Exceptions.*
x	choix, crucifix, prix, flux, reflux.
eur	bonheur, cœur, chœur, déshonneur, extérieur, honneur, labeur, malheur, pleur.
ion	crompion, lampion, million, bastion.
son (preceded by a vowel) .	poison, tison.
ée	athée, mausolée, trophée.
té	arrêté, comté, comité, côté, été, pâté, traité.
ie . . .	foie, génie, incendie, parapluie.
ace . .	espace.
ai . . .	none.
. . .	»
. .	»

Rule.	*Exceptions.*
ence	silence.
ade	none.
ude	prélude.
ière	cimetière, derrière.
ure	augure, mercure, murmure, parjure.
lle	codicille, chèvre-feuille, intervalle, libelle.
mme	none.
nne	„
rre	beurre.
tte	none.
sse	carosse, colosse.

These rules, with their exceptions, comprise almost, if not quite the entire language, and will be useful as a reference to the student.

One of the greatest benefits of a knowledge of foreign languages is the clear insight it gives you into the depths and beauties of your own. For instance, if we read the French translation of OWN, *propre*, we shall comprehend that speech in Henry IV.,

> "Happy am I that have a man so bold
> That dares do justice on my proper son."

It is evident that *proper* is here taken in its French, not its English, signification.

Thus each language constantly throws a light

on all others, and gives us greater power and facility of expression. Italian is considered a remarkably easy language. Doubtless, the pronunciation is so; but the construction of this language, and its idiomatic tendencies (hardly exceeded by those of Spain), entitle it to a higher place than it generally holds. And then, with its sonorous yet soft and flowing words, its graceful phraseology, the memories of its departed greatness, its pre-eminence as the language of tenderness, it certainly is one of the most interesting studies in which a woman can indulge. But it should be studied with both French and English; and, probably, Piranesi's Grammar and Benelachi's Interlocutore will be found among the most useful elementary works. De Porquet's are also excellent.

It is not my purpose here to give a lesson in Italian, therefore I have said enough on this subject. I would only, in conclusion, remind you, that until you can *think* in a language, *think your every-day thoughts in it*, you are [illegible] acquainted with it.

Music, heavenly art! is too universally studied, and too much much discussed by those whose knowledge, compared to mine, is like the light of the sun contrasted with a tallow candle, to need much notice from me. It is frequently, however, less pleasing in general society than it ought to be; not because girls know music, but because they are ignorant of the rules of common sense.

Pretension, in this as in everything into which it enters, destroys all beauty and distorts every grace. A girl who has made music only one part of her education will attempt in a drawing room to perform some impossibility of Liszt, or sing one of Grisi's most trying airs in Norma, because it is *fashionable*, without the smallest regard to her own capabilities, or the comparisons which Mrs. Malaprop would decide to be "odorous." And, of course, every one feels that she fails—and her best friends do not desire she should do otherwise; for who would wish a wife or a daughter, moving in private society, to have attained such excellence in music as involves a life's devotion to it.

Now, were a young lady to play and sing only that which she could sing and play *well*, how much more pleasure would she give: and were she also to comply at once, modestly and gracefully, with the request that she would do so, her good taste and sense would be appreciated far more highly than, probably, her skill in music ever will be.

Another thing I would recommend, is to take few lessons from a *good* master rather than treble the number froma second-rate person. Depend upon it, a great name is seldom gained undeservedly. There is some intrinsic worth to sanction it. Therefore a dozen lessons from such a man as Henry Smart will be more profitable than a year's instruction from a less gifted teacher.

When unable or unwilling to continue to take lessons, musical exercises should be very assiduously practised. Herz' and Czerny's are excellent; but in some respects, perhaps, Bertini's are still better adapted for advanced pupils. Great care should be taken to exercise the left hand, in the use of which English performers are sometimes considered deficient.

Finally, whatever we may attempt in the way of accomplishment, let us aim at doing it thoroughly. Languages, especially, have a use beyond that of mere personal amusement, or even benefit. A knowledge of their respective languages draws nations together in a way which nothing else can do. At this moment we are experiencing the beneficial effects to the whole of the two greatest nations in the world, from the mutual knowledge of each other and of each other's language they have acquired within the last few years. And perhaps it is not unreasonable to hope, that as the confusion of tongues separated the one family of mankind into many peoples, so an increasing acquaintance with the language of others may bring about that reunion which will cause "wars to cease in all the earth."

CHAP. V.

CHARITY.

"Nay, this was kind of you. He had no claim,
As the world says.
None but the very same
As I on all mankind, were I as he
Fallen to such deep reverse."—SHELLEY.

UPON no virtue is so high an eulogium passed in the whole Bible as upon CHARITY; and assuredly there is none which confers so much and such general happiness in the exercise. Indeed the whole scope of religion, which teaches us to live for others rather than for ourselves, has for its object the diffusion of happiness throughout the world. To be in *charity* with all men, is, we are taught, the perfection of our duty to our neighbour, and to *women*, of whatever creed or country, the duties of charity are especially devolved; whilst for a girl to confess herself deficient in that virtue would almost be

to acknowledge herself unworthy of the name of woman.

In what then does charity consist? Not only in almsgiving, or many thousands would be almost deprived of the power of exercising this virtue? What charity is *not*, as well as what it is, we may gather from that beautiful chapter, the 13th of 1st Corinthians, in which we learn that we may bestow all our goods to feed the poor, and even give our body to be burned, without possessing true charity.

In the exercise of benevolence, the *motive* is that by which our conduct will be estimated. If we endeavour to relieve the poor around us, because they are Christ's legacy to us, our exertions cannot fail to be productive of good. If, on the other hand, it is "to be seen of men," we shall have the reward we seek in the approbation of our fellow mortals; but He who looks into the heart will estimate our conduct very differently.

Of the duty of aiding the less fortunate around us, there will not, however, be two opinions. It is so clearly the destiny of woman,

must be fit objects for aid; clothes are wanted for young children and sick women, and money to support them in the men's absence. No charity can be more legitimate than this. Residents in a village, too, have opportunities of knowing personally the wants and position of every inhabitant; and in all parts, district visiting, properly conducted, is a most valuable auxiliary.

The first consideration of all who attempt to aid the poor should be how they can do so without either giving offence or destroying the honourable feeling of independence. To enable a man to help himself should be the aim of any assistance given; for Alms degrade the receiver to the condition of a pauper, whilst Work, of any kind, ennobles him. This feeling is so inherent in our poorer classes, that thousands will undergo the most pressing want before they will enter the workhouse. Advantage should be taken of this almost universal sentiment, to endeavour to provide work in seasons of distress; and if we *give*, let our giving take the form of a little more than the current rate of payment, rather

than a direct donation. In the same way, sewing or knitting of some useful kind might be given to the women; and a young lady might be most beneficially employed in teaching the poor children some easy work, and afterwards giving them employment. Gifts of cast-off clothes too frequently are almost valueless to poor people, because they do not know how to make the best of them. The donor should then be able to show a poor woman the best way of turning the garment to account. Her superior education, and ready access to books of information, should enable her to know how the old coat may be made still to look respectable; how the faded bonnet may be made tidy; how the scanty week's wages may be economized so as to go far; how the sick child may best be tended and amused. But whatever information she may be able to impart, she must do it without ostentation or arrogance; and, indeed, the more we know of the real goodness and charity of the poor towards each other, as well as of the wonders they effect with their small means, the more humble will be our views of ourselves.

She who would do good, therefore, in her ministrations among the poor, must show a genuine sympathy with them. Evince pleasure at every effort at neatness and taste; but refrain from any approach to impertinent curiosity or fault-finding. As a *friend*—as one sincerely interested in their welfare—the poor will gladly receive you; but the house of an Englishman—be it palace or hut—is his castle, and no one likes another to intrude merely to see the nakedness of the land.

Teaching in Sunday and sewing schools are most appropriate occupations for young women; and they should be strenuous and intelligent missionaries in the cause of all those Provident Societies which now afford facilities to the working classes to lay by a portion of their savings. "If every one belonged to an insurance office," says an eminent philanthropist, "we should have no workhouses." It is a fact, that more poverty is caused by improvidence (and is therefore avoidable) than by any direct visitation of Providence.

Only lately, during the awful raging of

cholera, a case in point presented itself. A poor man died suddenly, leaving behind him six helpless children and a wife, and not a farthing in the way of provision but the week's wages in his pocket when he died; and yet he had earned good wages—more than many a curate has,—and he had the custom of giving each of his children twopence every Saturday night. What would that poor twopence have done? Why, it would, if invested in an insurance office, have secured at least 100*l.* to the bereaved family! And this poor father loved his children, and would have made any sacrifice for their welfare, but he did not know how to put his income to the best account. Had any kind visitor suggested the saving of these twopences, and pointed out the benefit to be derived from them, what thankfulness would the parent have felt in his dying hour, to think his children were not left destitute.

Believe me, the plans for insurance have only to be known, and the benefits understood, for them to become of universal application. Heaven helps those who help *themselves*; and if

young ladies would but acquaint themselves with the details and practical working of these matters, and promulgate the knowledge among their poorer neighbours—not forgetting that "example draws where precept fails,"—they would be the greatest philanthropists, the most practical improvers that society has ever been blessed with.

The sick and suffering have ever peculiar claims on the tenderness of woman. Whilst urging all to provide, by their own exertions, for the day of sorrow and affliction, we are in the interim bound to do our utmost to succour those who are in trouble. Here the visitor's field of exertion is a wide one; and she needs much discretion and good sense to become really the friend the suffering poor need. But let her not imagine that while she is bestowing such comforts as the invalid requires, or reading a chapter to her who is unable to read for herself, that the good done is not quite mutual. How many a young girl has learned, in the humble cottage, lessons of patience and resignation, aye, and true wisdom also, for which she will be a better woman all her life.

And we need to know the poor in their own homes to appreciate their many good and sterling qualities, their genuine and unselfish sympathy with each other in the hour of trial, the true benevolence that so often characterizes them. If they are improvident, they are not alone in their error; but for it they have excuses the educated portion of society do not possess. Let every lady therefore, who visits among the poor, strive to enlighten them on all great social questions, most especially on all connected with forethought and providence.

The question of casual almsgiving is one that is much discussed; and undoubtedly it is open to much abuse. Are we then to shut up our purses altogether, because we may be deceived? Certainly not; but in lieu of relieving casual beggars, and so adding, as you almost certainly will do, to the labours of the police, it will be better to confide a sum to the discriminating clergyman or magistrate, before whom cases of real hardship are sure to come. But whilst avoiding the encouragement of impostors, beware of hardening your heart to real distress. There are

some cases of trouble about the genuineness of which there can be no mistake. Let not such be met by the reply, "I never give to beggars." Better be deceived a dozen times than once suffer a case of real distress to pass unaided. I remember hearing an anecdote of one of the kindest-hearted beings that ever lived, who, walking in his brother's park, was accosted by a poor emaciated woman. Mr. S. gave her half-a-crown; his brother, the baronet, a penny, saying, "Charles! Charles! what will you come to?" "Many strange things, I dare say; but never to being a poor woman with a sick child on my back."

Whilst on the subject of charity, I cannot too strongly reprobate the practice of giving away, under this pretence, such articles of cast-off dress as cannot with propriety be worn by the recipient. Many a poor girl may trace her ruin to the love of finery first imbibed by a present of a cast-off ball-dress or gay bonnet from a young lady. Whatever part of your own wardrobe is suitable for them often forms an acceptable present to servants, or, altered and

mended, to the poor; but in giving them that which is not fit for them to wear, we inflict an injury as cruel as is in a woman's power.

And whilst making every effort to aid our fellow-creatures in every tangible way, let not the gentle looks, the consoling words, the evidences of human sympathy, be wanting. If she gives twice who gives *quickly*, she who gives with womanly gentleness and tenderness may be said to do the same.

> "The quality of mercy is not strained:
> It droppeth, as the gentle rain from heaven
> Upon the place beneath. It is twice bless'd:
> It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:
> 'Tis mightiest in the mightiest. It becomes
> The thronèd monarch better than his crown;
> And earthly men the likest Gods appear
> When mercy seasons justice."

CHAP. VI.

THE HEALTH.

"Cleanliness is next to godliness."—OLD PROVERB.

"WE are fearfully and wonderfully made," is the reflection of the Psalmist; and the most cursory examination of the human frame will show us the truth of the observation. We cannot consider any part of the mortal habitation of our immortal souls without wondering at and admiring the marvellous adaptation of each part to the use for which it is designed, and to its connection with all the others. Look at the contrivances for protecting that delicate and invaluable member, the eye, from any accidental injury: the overhanging brow, which forms a pent-house over it; the eyelashes, which themselves receive any particles of dust that might otherwise hurt it; and let us watch the rapid

and involuntary movement by which the lids instantaneously close on the approach of danger; and we need not go any further in our investigations to be assured that nothing less wise than Infinite Wisdom has planned every part of our bodies, and adapted all so as to combine the utmost perfection.

And since every peculiarity in the human frame is destined for some wise purpose; and every fibre, vein, and muscle has its own particular office; we may be well assured that we cannot neglect any part, or prevent it from performing its own duties, without serious injury to the whole; without, in fact, deteriorating or destroying our health—one of the most precious gifts of a beneficent Creator.

"But we cannot prevent illness. It is an affliction sent from the hand of God, and all we can do is to bear it patiently." This is the argument both of persons and nations; and the former neglect the means of preserving their individual health, while nations defer to employ, or utterly ignore those sanitary reforms which would certainly save the lives of thousands every

year. The fact is, we lose health as we do many other blessings; not because it is the will of the Almighty, but because it is *our own*. We are far too fond of throwing on a higher power the responsibility of our own acts of indolence or of sin.

Take the case of the father of a family, who knows that his income dies with him, and that only by insuring his life can he secure his family from want after his death. Does he do so? Not at all. He is willing to "trust to Providence;" but he is not willing to make the smallest personal sacrifice for the sake of those he loves. So some day he dies, and his children are left in poverty; and perhaps an appeal is made to the charity of the public for those who should have been comfortably provided for, had the parent used the means God placed within his reach for saving them.

So, each time that the cholera has visited our shores, it has slain the greatest number of victims where there has been a want of pure air and water, and where the people and their habitations are deficient in cleanliness; and it is

ascertained, beyond the shadow of doubt, that wherever cleanliness has taken the place of dirt, the pestilence has lost its power. Shall we, then, call our indolent neglect of proper precautions by the name of "submission to the will of God?" Certainly not. It is our criminal negligence which causes the destruction we almost invite.

Again,—a young girl exposes herself to violent vicissitudes of temperature, and goes out on a wet day with thin boots and fine stockings, and she gets a cold and is laid up on a sick bed. Or she laces so tightly that every part of the body is out of order—her lungs have no room to receive air—her heart is so cramped it cannot beat properly—her stomach is squeezed into such dimensions that no part of its offices are properly performed, and she becomes consumptive or dyspeptic; or she allows the perspiration to accumulate on her skin till all the delicate pores are choked up, and fever supervenes. But if, from any of these causes, she becomes a confirmed invalid, let her not think that this sickness was inevitable, but rather conclude that

it is the punishment of her neglect of those conditions of health which the Almighty intends we should employ.

I have enumerated these common instances of evils in our own power to avert, to impress on you the truth, that *Heaven helps those who help themselves;* let blessings be scattered as thickly in our path as the manna was of old in the camp of the Israelites, it is still our own hand that must gather them around us. Nor does this in any way alter the great truth, that all blessings come from Heaven; since the means to obtain them are put into our own hands.

The principal conditions requisite for the maintaining the body in health and strength, are Cleanliness, Exercise, and suitable Food and Dress.

Cleanliness. Personal purity is so essential to a refined woman, that it is wonderful it should not be more thoroughly and universally practised than it is. A lady would be shocked to be seen with dirty face or soiled hands; but it does not strike her that every part of the skin equally needs ablution. The reason of this is,

that all the surface of the skin, from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, is so covered with the pores, through which all the waste or injurious particles of the body are thrown off in the form of insensible perspiration, that a pin's point cannot be run in anywhere without touching one. When these pores are choked up, from want of cleanliness, fever and many other diseases are liable to ensue. Hence the necessity, in which all medical men agree, for every part of the person to be thoroughly sponged over once every day. No bed-room should be without the means for doing this, if a large bath cannot be had. A sponge of the coarse sort called honeycomb is better than a fine one, as it holds more water, and almost can be used for a shower bath. Cold water gives a far more invigorating bath than tepid; but those who are not very early inured to it must begin it cautiously. The feet should *never* be set in cold water before the face, neck, and upper part of the body have been well sponged with the same. But some constitutions can never bear the shock of cold water, and then tepid must be used. In both cases, a healthy glow

must be produced by friction with a coarse rough towel, or a flesh-brush. A little spirits of wine thrown into cold water, the first morning or two, will generally prevent the bather from taking cold.

The hands, nails, and teeth must always be carefully attended to. The teeth demand the greatest care, and should be washed after every meal, as well as the last thing at night. Pure cold or tepid water is said to be the best thing in a general way, with a little charcoal or white soap occasionally. But, after being for years a martyr to toothache, I never had an attack after using regularly Cooper's Antiseptic Carnation Tooth-paste.

My freedom from that "hell of all diseases" might not be the effect of the dentifrice; but the coincidence is singular.

A visit should be paid to a dentist once every six months.

Nothing adds so much to the charm of a woman's appearance as fine hair; and the most beautiful will be spoiled by neglect. It should be thoroughly brushed every night, and washed

occasionally with soft water and the yolk of eggs, which has all the cleansing power of soap without its harshness. Those who wear curls should never roll the hair in stiff paper of any sort, and especially not in newspapers, as the roughness breaks the hair. The ends should be cut every fortnight.

Great care should be taken of the nails. Those of the feet require even more than the finger-nails, as they are liable to grow in with the pressure of boots, and to cause serious inconvenience: they should be pared away at the sides, and those of the hands allowed to form a point in the centre. The skin should be carefully rubbed back to give the nail the long almond-like form which is thought so great a beauty: this should be done every time they are washed.

EXERCISE is another essential condition to health, as well as to the proper development of the powers. The word, as popularly used, implies *walking*, which gives exercise to the legs only. But it is not less desirable that the *arms* should have free play, and this can only be done

by either calisthenics or by the simpler method of doing some portion of the household work. There is no better exercise in the world than rubbing a table or a sideboard, or sweeping a room; and it is certain that half the young ladies who are now reclining on the sofa in delicate health, weary of themselves and almost of life, would be far better and happier if they took daily some portion of the household duties, especially the active part of them. Every muscle and limb would have its share of exertion, a genial glow throughout the frame would be produced, and the general health would be certainly improved. But, under whatever form, a certain amount of exercise must be taken daily, to maintain the health; and exercise in the open air is not always practicable, besides that it does not answer the purpose entirely. Whenever it does not rain during the entire day, however, a walk should be taken for at least an hour, with the precaution of changing any damp clothes immediately on re-entering the house, and carefully wiping and rubbing the feet if they are at all wet.

SUITABLE DRESS is another condition of health. Clothing should be warm, light, and comfortable. Woollen stockings should be worn throughout the winter, and such boots as will effectually preserve the feet from damp. Cloth boots, however thick the soles, are unfit for wet weather, as the ancles are sure to get wet, and they remain a long time damp. By far the most comfortable boots for wet weather are Wellingtons, such as are worn by gentlemen; the thick leather protects the legs both from wet and cold, and they are much more readily taken off than those that button or lace. I have known several ladies wear them throughout the winter with great satisfaction, and remember well the remark of a distinguished medical man, when some jesting at the Wellingtons was going on: "Ah, Mrs. ——— is an enemy to doctors; she knows prevention is easier than cure." Corns, which are such a source of annoyance, are generally the result of pressure on some part of the foot, which will always be the case while boots and shoes are purchased hap-hazard, like bonnets or gloves.

All boots should be made on a last expressly for the wearer; but of course this cannot be the case when we do not deal regularly with one tradesman. They should be amply long and wide, so as to give the natural tread, which generally is about double the width of the French sole. The popular notions of a beautiful foot are extremely erroneous. It is thought desirable the foot should be very narrow, and tapering at the toe. Now, this is not the form in which feet are made, consequently the modern boot is calculated to produce deformity, and an ungraceful carriage is the result. The only rational bootmaker I ever saw always sketched the sole on a bit of paper, making his customer stand firmly without a shoe while doing so. Thus the peculiar form of the foot was obtained, and the boot was made to it, instead of the reverse, which is usually the case. This very sensible and artistic person was Mr. Dowie, in the Strand.

But the foot is not the only part of the frame that we delight to deform. What shall we say to the tight-lacing system, and the tortures endured by its votaries? Dr. Todd says, "Even

Pharaoh only demanded bricks without straw for a short time; but the fashionable lady asks to live without breathing for many years." At the present day so much has been written against the improper use of corsets that some of the new generation do not wear stays at all: still many thousands do; and young girls delight to compress themselves until they attain that height of their ambition, a small waist—a deformity which not only detracts from the pleasingness of their appearance, but also inevitably destroys their health. Many sudden deaths have occurred solely from tight-lacing; but in many more, nay in thousands of instances, such a state of universal disease is produced by this cause as ends, after long suffering, in premature death. To describe a tithe of these cases would be to fill a volume; and, for the present, we must content ourselves with admonition, the more earnest because it is of vital importance to every woman to be perfectly well-formed, not only for her own sake, but also as it may greatly affect her offspring.

Every medical man agrees that stays or cor-

sets, if worn at all, should be fastened in front, and from the bottom instead of the top. They should be amply large, especially across the chest; soft, and without bones or shoulder-straps. The object of lacing them from the bottom instead of the top is, that by the former process there is apt to be a pressure of the organs downwards, displacing the viscera, and materially interfering with the process of digestion. And we must not forget that a red nose and flushed face are among the undesirable results of this destructive practice.

Another common error in dress is to allow a great weight to rest on the hips. No heavy petticoats should be fastened round the waist without a body or straps over the shoulders to throw the weight on them; but, indeed, *lightness* should be as much studied as warmth in selecting articles of dress. To walk or take other exercise in heavy clothes is to add enormously to the fatigue. Nor must it be forgotten that we catch cold more frequently from exposing our back than our chest to draughts. The lungs are attached to the spine, and are

placed between the shoulders; hence the pain in that spot when they are affected. But from ignorance of this fact we protect our chests from cold, but think the shoulders of no consequence. Both parts ought to be covered with flannel.

It is well, however, not to acquire the habit of *coddling*, as, in a climate so changeable as ours, it is impossible wholly to escape draughts and damp. The best safeguard is to strengthenthe constitution as much as possible; and cold spunging is almost a certain preventive of cold catching.

Fresh Air is another necessary of life and health; and instances have not been wanting, even during the last few months, when sudden death has arisen from breathing polluted air. As soon as you rise from bed in the morning you should throw off the whole of the bed-clothes, and, after dressing, open the window at the *top* and *bottom*, as well as the door, in order that a thorough draught should air the sheets and bed. In very damp weather, however, a fire and the open doors will be better than having the window open too long. The

nightdress, also, should be thoroughly aired after being taken off—never folded up directly, as is sometimes done. The same rule applies to linen taken off at night, to be put on again in the morning; every article should be hung up so as to be aired—*never* folded up. There is no necessity for untidiness if this rule is carried out; the room may look quite as orderly as if every article was folded, and the advantage to the health is incalculable.

Lastly, the greatest care should be taken to have abundance of air while sleeping; as much is needed as during the waking hours, and as no fresh air is admitted into the room by the casual opening of doors, it is doubly imperative to get all we can. To cover the mouth or any part of the face with the bed-clothes is an act of suicide; it prevents the necessary supply of air reaching the lungs, and inevitably produces disease. If great cold is felt, it is better to wear a warmer nightdress than to risk all the evils produced by impure air reaching the lungs. If the mouth is covered, the lungs can only inhale again the same poisonous air they have already rejected,

and the result is nothing more or less than DEATH, as certain as if a dose of arsenic were taken.

WHOLESOME FOOD, taken in proper quantities and at proper periods, is another essential to health. It should be simple and nutritive, and the meals should be from four to five hours apart, the most substantial being taken in the middle of the day. As to the quantity necessary, as in most other things, habit is everything, and a girl may learn to consume at each meal as much as would be necessary for a hard-working man; but it does not follow that it is *desirable* she should eat such quantities: on the contrary, the more moderately she eats, the better her health is likely to be, and the less her mind will be dulled by the influence of the body. Over-eating is more common than we are apt to imagine; perhaps ninety-nine out of every hundred eat more than they can digest, and consequently more than they want. No wonder so many medical men are needed; half our illnesses occur from causes which we can ourselves prevent, and at least a quarter from *over-eating*.

All our food should be as simple as possible, and it is never wise to eat of more than one or two dishes at a meal. Supper is certainly a sociable and pleasant meal, but is said to be very unhealthy. No solid repast should be taken within two hours of bedtime. All stimulants, even strong tea and coffee, are injurious to young persons; and much sugar and butter are very bad, causing bile, and upsetting the stomach. As to sauces, the only one that a young girl needs is a good appetite; she can and ought to dispense with all others.

And last, but not least of the essentials to health, comes a CONTENTED MIND. Wonderful as is the connection between soul and body, we cannot indulge in any violent passion without injuring our whole system; and anxiety will tell upon the constitution and destroy the strongest health.

Whilst doing our best, then, to avert all evils, mental or bodily, from ourselves and those who are dear to us, let us not be over "careful and troubled;" it is one thing to abandon all to a blind reliance on Fate, and another to have a

firm and childlike confidence in the good providence of God. Sorrows and sickness will come to all; but if we have done our best to avert them, we have no self-reproach to embitter us in their endurance. To many a heart has that exquisite song of "The Pilot" brought comfort and hope in the hour of trial:—

"'It is not apathy,' he cried,
'That bids me say to thee,
Fear not, but trust in Providence,
Wherever thou may'st be.

"'Twas such a sea as this engulphed
My father's lifeless form;
My only brother's boat went down
In just so wild a storm.

"And such, perhaps, may be my lot,
And still I'll say to thee,
Fear not, but trust in Providence
Wherever thou may'st be.'"

CHAP. VII.

THE SICK ROOM.

"When pain and anguish wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou!"—SCOTT.

"Hath she not soothed me, sick? enriched me, poor?
And banished grief and misery from my door?
Hath she not cherished every moment's bliss,
And made an Eden of a world like this?"

THE work that, whilst professing to counsel young women, omitted all mention of the duties of the sick room, would indeed be imperfect; for where is there to be found one of our sex so isolated as never to be called upon to watch over a suffering friend, or so robust that she is never herself likely to be an unwilling captive on a couch of pain?

Surely there is no young girl who would willingly depute to hirelings the care of a parent, or a younger brother or sister, suffering from one of the many maladies to which we all are liable;

who would shrink, either in selfish fear or morbid sentiment, from administering to the relief of those she loved? But as it is possible that some may be deterred from proffering their aid from mistrust of their own powers of usefulness, and as some also are doubtless so ignorant of the duties of a nurse as to be rather a hindrance than a help, I will just give a few directions concerning the most obvious duties of those who are engaged in attending an invalid.

But let me first remark, that those who would leave a suffering parent or friend to the care of a professional nurse, under the idea that her services would be more welcome because she is more skilful than themselves, little know or guess the blessings which they thus voluntarily forego; for who can estimate the increase of affection which will be lavished on the dutiful daughter who has been her father's faithful nurse during a long illness? Who can tell how the remembrance of a kind and loving sister, soothing and amusing him during a childish illness, may return to the heart of some prodigal brother, and recall him to his duty and his home? Who can

tell how many bonds of family union, that would otherwise have been snapped asunder in the wear and turmoil and conflicting interests of the world, are riveted yet more strongly by the tender sympathy and patient love which the suffering of some members have elicited from the others? And oh, never forget that affection and the desire to please will atone much for the want of skill; that your father and mother will receive your imperfect service with a sentiment of joy which can only be comprehended by you when you yourselves are parents. Then indeed, if not before, you will learn how the severest pain of which mortals are susceptible is assuaged, if not removed, by the tender and gentle ministering of a beloved child; that never more than in periods of bodily suffering do we recognise the truth, that

"Love is still the lord of all;"

for that wealth and luxury, great as is their power, are as nothing in soothing the agony of suffering, compared to the gentle voice of one we love, and the kind and patient watching of

those to whom we feel ourselves to be endeared.

But as it is desirable not only to possess the earnest wish to aid the sufferings, but also to know how best to do so, a little friendly advice as to the duties of the sick room may fairly be considered as an essential part of the guide. The qualities which every good nurse must especially possess are, CONSCIENTIOUSNESS, GENTLENESS, FIRMNESS, GOOD SENSE, and GOOD TEMPER.

First, undoubtedly, comes CONSCIENTIOUSNESS, by which, in this instance, we imply a rigid and truthful obedience to the orders of the medical man, and the giving a careful account to him of every symptom and of every incident connected with the patient. It would seem almost unnecessary to insist upon the propriety of obeying the orders of the doctor, did we not daily see instances of the evasion of them. One would think that it followed as a matter of course, on calling in a medical practitioner, that, after giving such a proof of confidence in his skill, we should implicitly carry out all his wishes; but probably every member of the profession could relate instances of

a patient's life being endangered, if not sacrificed, by the obstinacy of the sufferer or the neglect of the nurse. The guardian of a sick room, therefore, should not only rigidly obey orders herself, but she should insist on the obedience of others, and esteem it a part of her duty to acquaint the medical attendant with any violation of his rules. She should be careful to inform herself what diet is proper for the patient, and at what intervals it should be taken, as well as with regard to medicines and every other matter. Every symptom should be carefully noted, and related at the next visit of the doctor. It may or may not be important: of that you are not required to be a judge; your duty is simply to be as a hand or an eye for him during his absence, observing everything, and following his orders in all matters, large or small. To do this, and yet to be welcome to a patient who is perhaps rendered irritable and self-willed by severe suffering, how much is needed of two other qualities we have named—GENTLENESS and FIRMNESS. Gentleness indeed can hardly be sufficiently extolled in a nurse: like charity, its

twin sister, it covers a multitude of sins. A low sweet voice, always "an excellent thing in woman," is doubly so when the brain is racked by suffering, and the hearing rendered unusually acute by disease; at such a time a harsh loud tone is quite inexcusable. Some women, however, in their anxiety to avoid noise, make a practice of *whispering* all their communications with others in a sick room, which is very frequently more injurious, as it is more exciting to the nerves than the loudest ordinary voice. Every sort of noise should be avoided with equal care. Quietness is almost invariably one of the conditions of restoration to health, and in nervous diseases especially the crumpling of a piece of paper, the banging of a door, or the throwing of coals on the fire will be sufficient to increase the previous fever and excitement to an alarming degree. Everything necessary should therefore be done with the utmost quietness, and no precaution be spared that will prevent the carelessness or skill-lessness of others from injuring our charge. All bustle and fuss should be avoided, and such forethought exercised in con-

sidering what will be wanted, and what is done with, that no unnecessary opening and shutting of doors takes place. A little *method* in all these matters will diminish your own fatigue and that of the servants, and save much annoyance to the patient. But if gentleness be requisite in movement, how much more so is it in all our intercourse with the sick! The soothing tone, the look of affection, the indulgence of any harmless whim are quite compatible with the utmost firmness in obeying orders and causing them to be obeyed. Whoever is placed near a sick couch will almost certainly encounter much waywardness and petulance, and perhaps at times some injustice; this must not only be borne, but it must be borne as if there were nothing to bear. To display any petulance in return would be to show yourself utterly unfit to be a nurse; to attempt to appear magnanimous—to act as if there were something to forgive—would probably wound one already suffering self-reproach for the impatient word which has wounded you. A generous heart must be already deeply grieved by having suffered even severe bodily pain to

extort an unkind or an ungrateful word; and if, whatever the lips may express, the *heart* is not touched by kindness during illness, any parade of forgiveness would be worse than useless.

Nor must we forget that our duty is in no way affected by the waywardness and irritability of our charge, whatever our comfort may be. To do all in our power to lighten the sufferings of the patient, and contribute in every way to his restoration to health, is the obvious duty of a nurse. To lead the thoughts, therefore, to cheerful subjects, to draw the attention from present suffering, to inculcate cheerful submission to the will of the Almighty, and trust and faith in his love, are duties almost more imperative than any others in those who watch by the sick. But if we do not *feel* these sentiments ourselves, how shall we impart them to others? If we ourselves have no stay, no truth, no confidence in our heavenly Father, words of consolation from our lips will be but as "sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." Sad indeed is it if the hour of pain and suffering is the first in which we begin to think of the future; for it is

an hour when we see so clearly through all fallacies, that nothing less pure and true than Eternal Truth itself can satisfy our minds. At such a time, a knowledge of the Bible is of unspeakable benefit; and often the hymns and pieces of sacred poetry learnt in the days of childhood may be available to lighten and cheer the dreary hours of suffering. This should always be a motive for acquiring and retaining a store of such things, since there are often times when to read is impracticable, both to patient and nurse, and when the recital of a few verses, or a hymn, may be an unspeakable benefit.

In all intercourse with the sick, good sense will teach us to avoid any unnecessary irritation of a mind already excited and enfeebled by disease, and good temper will induce us to give way to them in every point which does not involve their well-being. Needlessly to oppose the harmless fancy of a patient is an act of folly as well as cruelty, and this is especially the case when he is sufficiently convalescent to no longer be a subject of great anxiety. How many are

retarded in their progress towards complete recovery by the thoughtlessness of those about them, or some foolish indulgence they have been permitted. All medical men say that even greater care is necessary during recovery from a dangerous illness than whilst it is at its height; because, when we are conscious of danger, we guard against it, but when we consider it as passed, we forget that it may return.

The progress of science has taught us that air and cleanliness are quite as necessary to abate illness as to maintain health. Frequent changes of linen and thorough ablution will mitigate the severity of any feverish attack, and contribute greatly to recovery. Vinegar in tepid water, or a little eau-de-cologne thrown into it, is most refreshing, besides lessening the danger of cold. The same linen should never be worn during a consecutive day and night, unless in cases of extreme illness, when it is dangerous to move the patient. Everything in the way of linen should be thoroughly aired and well warmed, so that no chill may be felt on coming in contact with it.

Medicine should be given with the greatest exactness; and as the capacities of spoons are as various as those of people, those to be used in measuring physic should be shown to the medical man, that he may decide on the suitability.

Never give medicine without looking at the label, to see if it is right. I knew a fond mother who nearly sacrificed her favourite child by giving him the wrong medicine in the dark. It was only the utmost promptitude in obtaining medical assistance which saved his life.

Beware of disturbing a patient from sleep, even to take medicine, unless especially desired to do so. For any other reason it is most improper. Do not urge food or drink when nature does not seem to require it, and beware of irritating by an appearance of over-officiousness. How many nurses, with the kindest intentions, cause so much irritation to a patient that they become almost odious! They stand at the foot of the bed, and perhaps lean on it while talking, and shake at once the bed and the nerves of the sufferer. They drop the tongs or poker, or throw the

coals on the fire with an energy which is excruciating; they bring up a little tea or gruel, and it is slopped over the cloth, and the sickly appetite is too much disgusted to remain. They enter into some long story without noting the weary eye, the contracted brow, the languor which denotes fatigue, and then they wonder at the impatience with which they are told not to talk.

In all that appertains to a sick room, good sense is one of the most essential qualities of a nurse.

The excessive weariness of the limbs, arising from long confinement to bed, may be greatly alleviated by a few simple remedial measures, seldom taken in this country even among the affluent. *Friction,* judiciously employed, is one of the most valuable, as it reduces swelling, lessens cramp, and produces a delightful feeling of refreshment. The palms of the hands should be employed for this purpose, or the hands may be tied in warm coarse flannel gloves. The friction should always be upwards, not *up and down,* as is generally practised; it should con-

sist of a steady, even, and powerful, but not violent pressure, in which the fingers have no business at all, and may judiciously be accompanied by a sort of *kneading* of the fleshy parts of the limbs, which greatly tends to restore the circulation.

Friction so employed has the effect of almost magically soothing a patient, and will often be succeeded by a delightful sleep when all other means to obtain it have failed. The way in which our beds are made might often be altered beneficially; the blankets, &c., weigh too heavily on the chest and impede the breathing, while on the feet there is not a sufficient quantity. A small round bolster, such as is used on a couch, placed occasionally under the knees, will be found a great relief.

The air of a sick room must be kept as fresh as possible, and the temperature very even. All disagreeable odours should be avoided; eau-de-cologne should be freely used, and chloride of lime in water, placed in a shallow vessel on the floor, and daily changed, will be useful in infectious diseases.

One of the pleasantest and most powerful deodorizers is coffee, freshly roasted and ground. It is so refreshing that hardly any one would object to its use.

Among the most obvious duties of a nurse is to take care of *herself*. No experienced person will fail to do this; but it is not for the experienced I am writing. To the loving daughter, watching the couch of her parent, there appears to be something almost magnanimous in self-neglect, and if she have less good sense than good feeling, she will very probably abstain from those precautions which will insure her own continued health. But this is neither wise nor good; the more we think our services of value to others, the more careful we should be to preserve the power of rendering those services, and this cannot be done if we debilitate ourselves. In night-watching especially, we should be careful to take a sufficiency of good plain food, and to wrap ourselves up so as not to be injured by the increased cold. We should also avail ourselves of all the opportunity we have to rest, by lying down undressed, *not*, if avoidable, with

clothes and corsets on. Bathing is as necessary to a nurse as sleep.

In approaching the bed of a person suffering from infectious disorders, we should be careful not to stand so that we inhale the breath of the sick person, nor should we begin our morning duties on an empty stomach. Exercise in the open air should always be taken, if possible; and all the conditions under which health is maintained in ordinary circumstances should be doubly attended to when occupied as a nurse.

But it falls to the lot of woman to be the sufferer as well as the soother of the sufferings of others, and perhaps the most valuable lessons of her life are learnt during such seasons of trial. Whatever experience she may have as a nurse may be turned to excellent profit when she is herself dependent on the care of others. Has her patience been tried by the obstinacy of a patient who refused to submit to needful remedies, she will certainly summon resolution enough to avoid subjecting others to the same trial; has she felt how thoughtlessly her rest has been disturbed at the moment when she has

been disposing herself for a brief repose, by a request for something which might just as well have been furnished before, she will be careful to have her wants supplied before her nurse prepares for rest. She will try to suppress impatience, and to give as little trouble as possible, and she will endeavour to exercise such self-control that it will render the very tedious task of her attendants almost a pleasure.

Very many trifling indispositions are converted into serious illness by the nervous, irritable, nature of the sufferers. A pleasant book, light and sparing diet, and repose, will often avert illness, by acting on the mind and nerves. At any rate, they can do no harm; whilst excitement, unusually dainty food, and gloomy thoughts, are in themselves almost enough to create disease.

Whilst all possible care, then, is taken of the health, let us bend to the will of the Almighty when sickness and suffering are apportioned to us; we may learn much from such seasons of retirement from the world. Not only will the fair face of Nature look more lovely than ever

when we are again permitted to behold it; not only shall we learn to prize more highly the love and kindness of which we have been the objects: but we shall have learnt more of our own hearts; we shall know better the errors of our past life, and be able more completely to correct those errors in future; we shall feel more deeply the value of that life which God has bestowed upon us, and have, it is to be hoped, a more earnest desire that it should be devoted to the happiness of our fellow-creatures.

* * * *

In concluding the subject of the sick room, I will give a few useful receipts for the preparation of various necessaries for an invalid, and also some observations regarding medicine.

The common way of taking any nauseous preparation is to swallow it first, and then eat something to take away the taste. It will be found a better plan to chew a small bit of lemon or orange peel *previous* to taking the medicine, and then to wash out the mouth with a little water.

Castor-oil is one of the safest medicines that can be given; and it would doubtless be used more extensively but for the repugnance most people have to it. I have, however, known those who could not swallow it in any other way take it without difficulty if prepared as follows:—

Put into an ordinary medicine bottle (not a phial) the dose of oil that is to be taken. Set half a teacupful of milk, with a bit of sugar, on the fire in a saucepan, and boil it. When boiling, pour it carefully into the bottle, cork it up instantly, shake it well for two or three minutes, and pour it out at once, If taken immediately, very little taste will be observed. A drop or two of essence of cinnamon may be added.

Medicines that are to be given in drops must be measured most carefully. To enable you to do this, wet a small portion of the edge of the phial with the cork, and hold it so that the drops may fall over the damp part. If you have the least doubt about your own accuracy repeat the process, as a single drop, more or less, of certain medicines may be injurious. To give

precisely the proper dose, at precisely the proper period, is a part of the conscientiousness which you are bound to practise.

If you are yourself ill, do not increase your own suffering, and the difficulties of those in attendance on you, by hesitating to submit to whatever treatment is deemed necessary. If you take medicine promptly, instead of looking at it and inhaling its odour, it will be far less nauseous as well as more beneficial.

The food taken by invalids should be as delicately served as possible. A clean cloth, delicate china, and bright spoons, will make the plainest fare palatable. Generally speaking, sweets nauseate a sick person, and tea and coffee, from being so frequently taken, become absolutely odious. I have known a very simple drink greatly relished under such circumstances by the patient, and also approved by the doctor. It is simply good milk mixed with a larger or smaller proportion of hot water, and a *pinch of salt*.

Toast and Water should be made with a small square lump of bread, held at first at a

considerable distance from the fire, and afterwards more closely, until it is thoroughly dried through and browned to a dark brown (but without a shade of black) on the outside. Put it into a jug, pour over it a quart of *boiling* water, and cover it closely until cold; then strain it into another jug.

DRY TOAST, being more wholesome than bread, is generally given to an invalid. It should be made very carefully, thus:—Cut the bread evenly, and without crust, half an inch thick. Hold it at some little distance from the fire until it is warmed through, not keeping it still, but turning it slowly round, so that every part shall be equally toasted. When done put it in a toast-rack. Never lay toast flat on a plate, as it becomes leathery.

BROTH, when intended to be very strengthening, should be made with as small a quantity of water as possible, and with more than one kind of meat. One pound of beef and one pound of veal, slowly stewed together, will make soup of a more nourishing nature than the same quantity of one kind of flesh only would produce.

Spices and condiments of an exciting kind are not considered good for invalids. When a great amount of nourishment has to be given in very small compass, jug-broth may be made. Put a pound of lean beef or mutton, cut in small pieces, or a chicken cut up, into a close earthen jar, with a single cupful of water. Tie a thick paper over the top, and set it into a saucepan of water to stew. The water should be cold when the jar is put in, and allowed to boil very gradually at the fireside. The broth thus made may be salted to taste, and a single spoonful will contain considerable nutriment.

Barley Cream is one of the nicest luncheons possible for an invalid. Take two pounds of lean veal, and a quarter of a pound of the best pearl barley; boil these together very slowly in a quart of water, until they become of the consistence of cream; strain through a fine sieve, and add a little salt. Beef may be used instead of veal.

Barley water, lemonade, and many other nice drinks, are suitable for invalids. Sainsbury's fruit essences, mixed with plain or aerated

waters, are very delicious to patients who suffer from thirst and fever. Soyer's "Modern Housewife" contains admirable recipes for "comforts for invalids."

CHAP. VIII.

DRESS.

" Rich be your habit as your purse can buy,
But not expressed in fancy. Neat, but not gaudy,
For the apparel oft proclaims the man."

HAD Shakspeare been writing of our sex instead of his own, he might, with very great propriety, have left out the little adverb, which, in some degree, limits the axiom he has enunciated; for not *often*, but invariably, the apparel of a woman who has the power of selecting her own may be taken as a criterion of her character. In some instances this may seem a harsh judgment; for there are women who affect to think dress a matter of no consequence, and who make this indifference an excuse for any defect in their attire. But even here, it seems to me, the maxim may be held true; the want of attention to the details of dress indicates,

and very generally accompanies, a large amount of indifference to the feelings of others. A woman should dress to please others, and not herself; and the sentiment once admitted, that it is of no consequence how she looks, and whether her appearance is pleasing or the contrary, she will hardly stop at this halting place on the road to complete indifference. On the contrary, she will next discover that it is of no consequence what she says, or how she acts—"she does not care for the opinion of the world;" or "there is nobody that cares for her."

It is true that these are not the arguments generally to be heard from the young, who seldom err on the side of indifference, either to the duties of the toilet or to the opinion of the world. But whether the looking-glass engross too much or too little time, it is equally an error for a woman to be ill-dressed, since the attire is an index of the mind so unfailing, so accurate, that we need little more than a single glance at a woman to be able to learn all the most salient points in her character. Do we see a young woman dressed in the extreme of fashion, in a

style which neither her purse nor her position warrants; can we be very wrong in imagining her vain and selfish, with the head unfurnished just in proportion as the body is over-dressed? If, in addition, we observe a soiled stocking or petticoat, a buttonless sleeve, or an ill-fitting shoe; shall we not feel that indolence and impurity of person will end in tainting the mind? Can we help fearing that the love of finery, which this style of dress betrays, will prove some day, like Esau's mess of pottage, a temptation too great for her womanly truth and feeling to withstand? May not the woman who so loves DRESS be tempted to barter for it that noble birthright, her warm and honest affection for some one who is not in a position to gratify her love of finery; to exchange her independence for a slavery which will be none the less galling because it is a voluntary sacrifice. From how many temptations is that woman free; from how many trials does *she* escape, who has not imbibed in girlhood a love of dress!

And yet we would deprecate almost as much any unwomanly indifference to the choice of

attire. A woman should be always well-dressed —dressed, not so that the casual visitor will say, "What a beautiful gown Miss —— had on!" or "What an elegant bonnet!" but "Well, I did not remark what she had on; but she always looks so nice."

Now the great secret of good dress is HARMONY; harmony with our position, harmony with our persons, harmony of each part with the other. I believe were these conditions studied, with a little reflection and a cultivated mind, the majority of women would really look as charming as Nature intended they should be. We all know —or profess to know—what musical harmony is. Now I would carry the same unity of purpose, the same blending of tones, the same nice appropriateness, into the details of the toilette. And first, we must study our own position, and make our dress accord with it. The servant—whose clean cotton gown, short enough to admit of freedom of action, and clean stockings, and stout shoes, show that she adapts her dress to her place—is quite as pleasing and attractive, in her way, as the lady in her elegant peignoir,

surrounded by all the knicknackeries of a boudoir. The fitness of the toilette in each case is an essential part of its charm; and it is this fitness which I would especially have you study. Your social position is such that it is part of your duty to enter actively into domestic details —to make the pies and puddings for the family repast, and to perform similar domestic offices. How much more pleasing a clean washable dress, and large apron of a similar character, would be than a shabby silk or gaudy barège. In the evening, as your duties are different, so your toilette should be so, suited to your station, and to the occasion; as rich, or as inexpensive as you please, but always simply made and fitting well.

A due regard to the harmony of our dress with our position will prevent us from indulging in a taste for finery, or even for elaborate elegance not in accordance with our circumstances; for we should never forget that it is not sufficient for a bonnet or shawl to be extremely pretty, or very cheap, for it to be suitable for us to wear. A lady whose airings are taken in

a carriage may very properly wear a bonnet which is elaborately trimmed; but it would be inappropriate for a pedestrian, however becoming to her face. All purchases, then, should be made with a direct reference to our social standing, as well as to the next point of harmony —our personal appearance. To know ourselves, even as far as our faces and figures go, is a knowledge which we can only acquire after some study; nevertheless it is very necessary for every one who would wish to possess that circular letter of recommendation, a pleasing personal appearance. Of course we cannot alter the form of the features, or add to our height, or in any other way remodel ourselves; but we *can* dress with taste and propriety, so as to soften down any defects of nature, and increase the effect of any beauties.

To do this, however, we must know something of the laws of light and shade, as well as of the principles of colouring; and it must be conceded that, in these respects, Nature has at least as much share as Art, since an eye for colour is one of the rarest gifts bestowed on women, and one

the want of which no study will supply. Some broad general principles however there are which all may understand. And first, we may take it as an axiom that *Fashion* can never of itself be a sufficient guide in matters of dress, but that its dictates must be modified to suit the characteristics of each individual. Suppose, for instance, that large plaids, or checked patterns, are the fashion, will that render them at all becoming to a small slight person, or even to a tall woman who is more than proportionably stout? As the effect of these checks is to give breadth without length, those only who are tall and very thin can wear them with advantage, because they supply a deficiency of Nature. Stripes, on the contrary, add to the length, and therefore become little women, or those who have much embonpoint. Flounces, again, may look well in some few soft materials, and on tall slight figures; but what can be more ungraceful than a little woman, whose body and limbs appear almost dissected at three or four divisions of the skirt, by the light and shadow being abruptly broken at the edges of the stiff heavy

flounces. Dress should, in fact, be *drapery*; and the more natural its folds and falls, the more elegant its appearance. I have heard more than one eminent artist say, that of all the materials of which a lady's dress could be composed, a pure *flannel* forms the most beautiful folds, and that it only wants colour to be the most appropriate dress possible for a portrait. Fine merinos also hang very gracefully; some *satins* are scarcely less effective; but little people should avoid every figured or stiffened material, such as brocades, stiff silks, and bayadine *dresses*.

Tall women have certainly an advantage in the variety of styles which they can wear with *pro*priety: few materials are made for ladies' dresses which they cannot appear in without *greatly* outraging good taste. Even they, however, will do well to study the general rules by which a pleasing effect is produced. All colours also must be selected with reference to individual appearance, and to the harmony of part with the whole. For a blonde to surround her face with brilliant tints, or a dark-skinned,

dark-eyed girl to patronise pale lavender or pink, or bleu ciel, is evidently in bad taste. A pale cheek has a bloom thrown on it by the reflection of a pink bonnet; but then the pink must not be too deep, or it will form too strong a contrast: blue, and even green, are very becoming to rosy beauties, especially the latter, when there is too deep a bloom on the complexion: dark rich colours, again, usually harmonize with dark hair and eyes: maize, or primrose-coloured bonnets may be appropriately worn in summer by those of this complexion, whilst they would look vulgar or gaudy on paler or fairer girls: and brighter neck-ribbons and gayer-coloured dresses can be worn by our Minnas than could possibly be becoming to Brenda. Too many tints, it may be remarked, never look well in a lady's dress. It gives one the idea that she is vying with peacocks, without the power of eclipsing them in splendour. It is almost equally out of taste to wear two or three shades of the same colour. Nothing can look worse than to see a dress of one shade, a ribbon of another, and perhaps a bonnet of a third, of the

same general colour. Yet this style is frequently adopted under the idea of things *matching*. These matches are like many others in the world; they unite, without blending. When the dress is of one predominant colour, the accessories should be of another which will form a good contrast with it. Thus, with a brown silk you may wear either pink or blue ribbons; only observe that some browns harmonise with pinks, and some with blue. Generally a *warm* tint can be toned down with a blue, and a graver colour enlivened with pink. The same may be said of all the varieties of stone and fawn colour. Some tints go well with pinks, some with blues, some with crimsons, and some with green. A little study of these effects with wools will be by no means a waste of time. It will assist you in arranging furniture, dress, and many other things; and whether your income be large or small, it will enable you to throw an air of refinement on your ménage which no mere wealth can ever give.

Another point to be considered in selecting your toilette is your position as regards society.

If your parents are in the habit of giving or attending evening parties, you will require suitable dresses; but should your family arrangements require daily nicety rather than occasional full-dress, you will consult comfort as well as good taste, rather by selecting such articles of attire as will never look conspicuous. A plain silk dress is never out of date; you need not blush to appear in it at any chance reunion, whilst it does not look overdressed for your parents' drawing-room. But then it should not be what the French call *façonnée:* no streaming ends of ribbon, or imitation lace, or pretension of any sort. Let it *fit* well, and be free from dust or stains, and then you will always look ladylike in it. Another point of consideration to those whose purses do not allow them to buy a great variety of dresses, shawls, &c., is that no one leading or expensive purchase should be of such a character that other articles of dress will not look well with it. For instance, your best dress for the summer may be a rich Napoleon blue silk; nothing but great thoughtlessness or want of taste would make you buy a light blue

bonnet to wear with it, or a mantle of another tint, or perhaps a shawl with a green ground. If such were your toilette, however rich each article might be in itself, the general appearance would be vulgar or in bad taste; and you would be known by your shawl or bonnet, as the case might be. If your purse, then, does not admit of a great variety in your toilette, buy articles of plain colours that will go well together, and not be too *voyante*. A black shawl or dress is never remarkable, and therefore can be longer worn than any colours. It is a point of economy, too, to buy everything as good as possible. One handsome shawl will look better and for a longer period than three or four flimsy mantles or visites costing the same sum. So with dresses, gloves, and every article of attire.

After all, it is the linen and the *lingerie* of a lady's wardrobe which are the evidences of her refinement. A fine outside, with coarse or ill-made linen, is so repugnant to good taste that it stamps a vulgar mind at once; and a lady's wardrobe will be a surer index of her character than even her letters. Of course wealth or re-

stricted means will be visible in the linen as much as in the outer garments; but as the making of this part of the wardrobe is the principal cost, and all women should be able to work well, there can be little excuse for any one wearing linen unfit for a gentlewoman. Let each article be plain if needed, but at least neatly made, and with no cheap lace or imitation embroidery to give a pretence of finery. Embellishments of this sort should be very good, or they should not have place at all. Handkerchiefs we frequently see trimmed with common lace or decorated (?) with coarse embroidery. Can anything be more vulgar? If the same sum were spent in plain fine cambric that is given for this trash, the taste of a gentlewoman would be shown. Let your wardrobe be excellent according to your means, but never beyond your means; and always study to have an *abundance* of neat if plain linen, rather than a limited supply of that which is more ornamental.

Those young ladies who are liable to be suddenly called from home on visits of pleasure or business will do well to have a complete set of

linen and other articles, such as brushes, combs, &c., in a separate drawer, ready for instant use on such occasions. And a little care in the wearing, mending, and arranging of the wardrobe will greatly diminish the cost. Very often an expensive dress is put on unnecessarily when the weather is uncertain, or when it is likely in some other way to be exposed to injury, and thus perhaps it is spoiled when the wearer can ill afford to replace it. In all these matters, and in very many others in which domestic economy is concerned, we should do well to borrow a little of the wisdom of our Gallic sisters, whose toilettes always look fresh and pure, and cost comparatively so little. But then a Frenchwoman would not put away a dress, or shawl, or bonnet, with a speck of dust upon it; and dresses are folded up most carefully, so that no creases shall appear when they are taken out again; and the difference in the *wear* can only be guessed by those who have tried the plan.

The "stitch in time," too, which is often so much neglected, is a valuable auxiliary in maintaining the wardrobe of a gentlewoman without

incurring great expense. To be able to mend every article neatly is quite indispensable. Not that we would recommend a young lady to darn her stockings with that curious fineness with which she might work a piece of point lace; this would be a total violation of the rule of harmony or fitness in all things, which we have already laid down. The time of that woman must be valueless indeed, who can find no better employment for it than to spend an entire morning over a pair or two of stockings; but by attending *regularly* to the details of her wardrobe, and mending everything when it first requires it, a great deal of time and money may be saved. And those who have an abundance of this world's goods, or who can put their time to more profitable account, will always find some less fortunate woman who will be thankful for the employment of repairing their linen; nor should we lose sight of the fact that every hour's occupation we can give to our own sex, and pay for honestly, is so much real good done—a good more sensibly felt, and far more beneficial to all concerned, than double the amount spent in un-

earned, miscalled charity. Let it, however, be *honestly* paid for; let a day's work be remunerated by what will find bread for that day, or we shall be congratulating ourselves on our charity, when we should be lamenting our indolence, and fancying ourselves useful members of society when we are but amongst its incumbrances.

Have we said too much about dress, or made it of too great consequence? We think not. For a woman to profess to consider this matter as one of no importance when addressing young girls just entering life, would be an affectation unworthy the writer as well as the reader. Dress, like everything else which influences the opinion of others regarding us, *is* of consequence. The merest stranger is prepossessed for or against us by our personal appearance; whilst it requires the acquaintance of years to enable our friends to appreciate our hearts and minds. Dress being so essential to a pleasing appearance, is a subject which should not be considered beneath the attention of any sensible woman. On the other hand, she will not be

disposed unduly to sacrifice to it either her thoughts or her time. Indeed, those who are habitually particular in their toilette are not the women who waste time over their mirrors, but those to whom neatness is a novelty, and an elegant appearance an event. Purity and propriety, or, as we have elsewhere designated it, *harmony*, are the secrets of a pleasing toilette; and these, if properly carried out, result in good to others as well as to ourselves. Taking it for granted that it is a woman's aim as certainly as her duty to assist others, we have only to point out how great is the difference between the cast-off wardrobe of a careful woman and of a slattern, to show how much we may assist others by our neatness as well as ourselves. Clothes and linen, however old and worn, are gratefully received by many public institutions as well as by the poor who surround ourselves; but if we neglect to keep them in repair, they are of no use to any one when we have done with them.

How often, too, can we by little presents from our own wardrobe aid a servant to save part of her wages, if we are careful to keep our

dress in repair; and besides the kindly feeling we encourage, we set an example that is almost certain to be imitated. On the other hand, to give faded ribbons and tawdry laces, or things unsuitable for a servant's wear, is an evil which cannot be too strenuously discouraged. This is neither wisdom nor kindness.

Let us then study harmony ourselves, and demonstrate its beauty to others, if we would deserve the praise of being well and appropriately dressed. By care and taste we may do more, with limited means, both to please our friends and benefit the poor than we could achieve by the most lavish expenditure, uncontrolled by principle and undirected by an eye for beauty.

CHAP. IX.

SOCIETY AT HOME AND ABROAD.

"I thought him the most courteous and gentleman-like man I had ever seen. What a charm it is! and what a duty too! We are so apt to forget that 'Thou shalt do no murder,' and '*Be courteous,*' are commandments written in the same book, and equally binding."—LADY C. LONG.

"MANNERS make the man."—OLD PROVERB.

AMONG the enigmas which the world constantly presents for the solution of those who look beyond the mere surface of things, is the different appreciation in which the younger members of a society are held by those who are but slightly acquainted with them, and those who have had the opportunity of constantly meeting them.

We see a handsome, showy, accomplished girl, sought for in parties, admired, flattered, caressed—every thing except, *beloved.* She shines, perhaps, for several seasons, the belle of every ball-room—the pride of all the picnics—

earnestly sought as a partner in a waltz or a polka, and fêted and admired to her heart's content. And yet, in all that time, among all her many flatterers, she has, perhaps, not one friend. How is this? Her young companions do not seek to make her their confidante; the dimmed eye of the aged does not brighten at her approach. No one seems to be the happier or the better for her presence; she is not *necessary* to any human being.

Another girl, on the contrary, has perhaps far fewer natural advantages; she is neither so handsome nor so accomplished; and yet children cling to her the moment she enters the room, and a smile gleams on the pallid face of age, and parents, and brothers, and sisters feel as if a sunbeam had made its appearance in the depth of a winter's gloom. It is difficult to define in what her charm consists.

> "But take her altogether," as some people say,
> "She has got"—what?—"such a winning way!"

It will not be difficult, however, for the close observer to discover that the *absence of selfishness* is the foundation of that varied grace which so en-

chants her friends. The fact is, that in the formation of *manners*, as in every other part of our conduct to our fellow-creatures, the Golden Rule is the only one that will be found of universal application, the sole *safe* foundation for any superstructure, "to love our neighbour as ourselves." What a comprehensive guide to our thoughts and our actions! What a test by which to try our conduct! No wonder that it is said to be "more than whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices."

But what has all this to do with manners and society? Literally everything. This rule, short and simple as it is, will, if followed, refine the manners and the mind so that we can never be otherwise than loved by those with whom we have intercourse. Let us see to what it is likely to lead. We are in the society of a person whose age and infirmities make them objects for respectful care and attention. We place the cushion for the feet, and the pillow to support the feeble frame; and we attend respectfully to the tales of times long passed, and minister kindly to the wants of our aged friend. And

all this is done quietly, unostentatiously, as a matter of duty; because we are commanded to "honour the face of the old man," and we feel that so we should like them to act to us in similar circumstances. We are doing only our duty—no more; but how rich is the reward! How many a tale or anecdote full of interest, how many a lesson of wisdom, is learnt by a duteous grandchild thus attending a feeble parent! For whilst the body decays the mind often increases in power and strength, and acquires an extraordinary beauty.

"The soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed,
Lets in new lights through chinks that time has made."

"Stronger by weakness—wiser men become
As they draw near to their eternal home;
Leaving the old—both worlds at once they view,
That stand upon the threshold of the new."

But supposing that the duties we pay to the aged are not in themselves sources of pleasure—that querulousness and infirmity make the sufferer impatient even of attention—will the girl who is imbued with the spirit of Christian courtesy therefore shrink from them? That

beautiful golden rule still exhorts her to "do as she would be done by;" and in the consciousness of fulfilling her duty, she finds a rich reward. And so, in every situation in life, courtesy (or politeness, as it is commonly termed), will be practised from principle, and not merely to please strangers. Where the former is the case, the absence of selfishness cannot fail to be observed, even by bystanders. Where civility is exercised only to strangers, and our own nearest and dearest are not under its influence, we are very far from having acquired real politeness. Indeed, the poet Cowper accurately describes this state of things when he says—

> "Our polished manners are a mask we wear,
> And at the bottom, barbarous still and rude,
> We are restrained, indeed, but not subdued."

Perhaps much of the evil of which I am now complaining arises from an undue appreciation of the claims of society in comparison with those of our own family. Courtesy, like charity, ought to begin in our home, though neither should end there; but too many young ladies keep their best manners and dresses together, only to be

taken out on special occasions. If a stranger were to enter the room, a young girl, with the smallest pretensions to polite behaviour, would rise and set her a chair, would express regret if she showed symptoms of fatigue, and otherwise appear to have an interest in her. Now, I am not quarrelling with this conduct, because it *ought not* to be hypocritical; she ought to feel regret at any appearance of suffering in a fellow-creature, and she should show any kindness in her power to a stranger. It is only "doing as she would be done by," and we may hope that the motive is as good as its result. But, if her own mother entered the room, and looked worn and weary, would the like courtesy be shown to her? Would the most comfortable chair be drawn to the fire, and the gentle tones of love and interest be used, and refreshment procured with alacrity? I am afraid not; but yet, were this girl's politeness that of the *heart*, assuredly it would. May we not say to her, "These things ye ought to have done, and not to leave the other undone?"

Again, a young lady has had large sums spent

her musical education; her elder brother's friend is staying with him; she wishes to please, when he asks her to sing she does so without a moment's hesitation. So far well; but little brother has brought his schoolboy friend, and he would like to hear Mary play; her brother is himself learning the flute, and would like to try with her. Is she then willing to put down the piece of work on which she is engaged, or the interesting tale that is nearly completed, to amuse either the young visitor or the brother himself? I fear this young lady, and many others of her class, keep their best manners for company, and think anything good enough for home wear. Yet which is most likely to reward self-sacrifice—the stranger, or the brother on whose happiness hers must be bound up for life?—whose alienation from home must result in sorrow, perhaps disgrace, to every member of the family.

Sometimes young people seem to think that the ordinary rules of politeness may be dispensed with whom those by whom they are surrounded [illegible] strangers at theatres, public entertain-

ments, in railway carriages and omnibuses. It has often been remarked that no situation presents such excellent opportunities for studying the character as a long journey made together, since any inherent selfishness is then sure to make itself remarked. But how often do we see young people who would be shocked at being considered wanting in politeness at home, act in such a manner among strangers as to prove that their courtesy is like a mask easily put on and as easily thrown off! I have seen a party of young people at a public entertainment—girls whose appearance indicated the situation of gentlewomen—talk to each other so loudly, even while the lecturer was speaking, that those in front of them could hardly hear a word. Surely they were not doing as they would be done by! I have seen others at such places, and in public conveyances, put their feet on the seats in front of them, to the manifest injury of the dress of any subsequent occupant; or push themselves into the best and most comfortable places, or insist, for mere whim, on the windows being up or down, without the slightest regard to th

claims of any aged or invalid person in the carriage. Was such conduct either Christian or polite? Could any really courteous person be guilty of it? Certainly not. Rely upon it, she who can be a lady when she pleases, never does please to be anything else; she who is courteous because it is a Christian duty, will be so under all circumstances and in all places.

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Hospitality is one of the duties we owe to society; and the manner in which we practise it shows whether we are actuated by kind feelings or only by love of ostentation.

A young lady's duties are of course very different to those of her mother; but so much may be done by her towards rendering her parents' guests comfortable, that I am sure she will find a little consideration of the requirements of her position very instructive. Should a visitor be expected to remain for a time, her bed-room should be carefully prepared for her, with a due thought for all that may be necessary to the comfort of the visitor. This is a duty with

which no servant should be intrusted, since it should be as much a labour of love as a matter of duty. Not only will the bed be thoroughly aired, and the linen well warmed, but writing materials and a few books, and flowers in season, should be placed in the apartment; and no one will allow a guest to enter a room without a fire, if she has any wish that the welcome shall be a warm one.

Then the preparations for the meal to follow the stranger's arrival will be made with reference to her tastes, and with a wish to see her enjoy herself. All will be done, too, in such excellent *time* that our young hostess' own toilette is made, and she is ready personally to welcome the friend, to see that the fires are burning brightly, and the kettle hissing on the hob, and to aid in the uncloaking and subsequent toilette of the traveller. Nor will pins, hair-pins, and such "small ware" be wanting from the toilette table, and to seek at the moment they are required. All such preparations will have been made beforehand. Then follows the social, comfortable meal, which, whether

costly or simple, will be enjoyed because tastefully laid out, and elegant in its perfect neatness. Then, when the guest retires, inquiry will be made whether everything she will be likely to want is in her room, whether she burns a light, (which should be placed ready to be lighted), and if she would like to be called in the morning, and at what hour. Offers of assistance at the toilette will be made by a daughter in a family not rich enough to keep a great number of servants, not only because it will be a pleasure to her to aid her mother's guests, but also because a visitor must cause some extra work; and if the one or two servants, who generally only just can get through their labours, are called upon for extra services, they must either be overworked or neglect some other duty.

To those who may be suffering from recent bereavement, or from pecuniary loss, when visiting us, we are called on as true women to show the most delicate and distinguishing kindness; and, in like manner, when our temporary guest or permanent inmate is in a somewhat humbler position than ourselves, we are doubly

bound to be courteous. But in these, and in all circumstances, we have only to have recourse to our golden rule, to act always right. How would you wish others to act to you in such circumstances? Act so to them, and you cannot fail to do right.

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The duties of a guest are somewhat different to those of a hostess, but the principle is immutable. Perhaps, however, the conduct of a young girl on a visit is even a greater test of her character than when she is in what she considers a more responsible position. Many a young girl has made friends or enemies for life by her conduct at the house of an acquaintance. Necessarily, whilst residing under the roof of comparative strangers, she becomes acquainted with many of their affairs,—some perhaps which they would not desire should be equally known to all the world. Now, whether by accident or by confidence she acquires such knowledge, it should be to her as if it had not been known at all. The Greeks, in their feasting-rooms, had

an inscription written, "Nothing that is said in here is to go out there." This should be the motto of every guest, and of every one residing in the house of another.

Equally reprehensible with the practice of repeating what is said or done before us under the seal of confidence, is that of entering into the quarrels or dissensions of the family in which we are temporarily resident, or of interfering in the domestic arrangements. A visitor should be without either eyes for the delinquencies of servants, or ears for the inharmonious discussions of her friends; and a tongue, if used too freely under such circumstances, is a most inconvenient appendage. Let her enter heartily into all the kindly plans for her enjoyment, let her show herself pleased with the effort to please her, let her try to contribute her share to the general happiness, and add as little as may be to the trouble of the domestics, and she will be a welcome and honoured guest.

Punctuality and attention to the hours of the hostess form an essential part of the good breeding of a visitor, and a young girl will be cautious

of leading the daughters of the family into a violation of the rules by which it is generally governed, since, as a guest, her own movements can hardly be found fault with, but she may cause her young friends to be severely reproved. The attentions that may be bestowed on her by other visitors to the house must be received as compliments to the mutual hostess; good taste and good sense will prevent a young girl from forcing herself into the notice of her elders and superiors, unless sought by them; and she will be cautious of accepting invitations or advances from the juniors of a family, unless they are evidently sanctioned by the parents. Pass off such invitations as mere courtesies until they are seconded by the seniors of a party, and even then make their acceptance conditional on your own parents' approval. Do not be ashamed to acknowledge that you are still under the guidance of your mother; be assured that the very fact of being known to be so will save you a world of difficulty.

Among the minor moralities of life may be reckoned that of not receiving courtesy or kind-

ness from comparative strangers without in some way acknowledging your sense of it. Not that I would have you keep an account of every civility shown you, and balance it by some act of your own, in the debtor and creditor style, but I would have you endeavour to prove your sense of gratitude by deeds rather than words. A specimen of your own needlework, or any trifle which will show that your friend's kindness has been felt, will always be appropriate. When you think that your hostess' purse is not a long one, your gift should be something which you hope she will find useful as well as ornamental.

The servants should always receive some little acknowledgment for the trouble you have occasioned them; and where a kindly feeling exists especially, a gown, a ribbon, or anything that they can keep and use, will probably be more appreciated than the money-value of the article.

But if it be true that gifts increase friendship and kindly feelings, especially is it so in our own family. How much of the domestic virtues of the Germans may we trace to the keeping up of

family festivals and the giving of family presents, in which the humblest domestic has her share. In the German and Swiss schools, too, the same kindly feeling is maintained; and assuredly nothing can be more gratifying to any teacher who really devotes her energies to her pupils, than a spontaneous and united acknowledgment of their regard for her. To each individual in a large school or family it costs little, but the gratification to all is no trifle. How often will the teacher's eye dwell on such a token of regard with affection and kindly feeling! How may it not cheer her in her arduous toil! How much goodwill may it not cherish between the teacher and the taught, not only at that time but for the rest of their lives!

I remember once being perfectly startled on paying a visit to a Parisian friend, who had long retired from business, at seeing the mantelpiece, and every available table, covered with bouquets, pots of flowers, and knicknackeries o every sort. It was her fête, and the presents came from some of her former workwomen. A lovely shawl was her husband's gift, a lace

collar a sister's, and so on. I expressed my surprise and admiration to one of the young people who came in later in the day, with a kiss à la Française, and a bouquet. "Ah, madame, que voulez-vous? C'est si peu de chose, mais madame etait si bonne! si bonne! Ce serait impossible de l'oublier."

This is one, but not by any means the only lesson our Gallic neighbours could teach us. They certainly understand the art of *living happily* better than we do; and they know how much the small courtesies of society contribute to happiness.

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An error which any girl who values her own happiness or that of others will avoid, is that of whispering to a companion, or appearing too absorbed in private conversation to attend to that of the general circle. The "loud laugh which speaks the vacant mind" is also one of the habits which a gentlewoman will shun. Do not, even in jest, repeat a vulgar speech or mimic grammatical inaccuracies; you will ac-

quire unconsciously the very errors which you detect in others. Study to speak well, and to the purpose; the accent of the voice proclaims the gentlewoman, even more than her toilette.

Try to break yourself of any inelegancies of movement, or tricks that may annoy others. Fidgeting with scissors or a key, balancing yourself backwards and forwards in a chair, grimacing, and many other things, are not only silly in themselves, but frequently the source of great annoyance to others. Imagine a lady in delicate health, suffering perhaps from some nervous complaint, being compelled, during a long journey, to sit opposite a girl who is tapping her toe on the floor all the time! Such suffering might even permanently affect her reason. We cannot doubt this, when we reflect that the most terrible torture of the Inquisition consisted of letting water fall, drop by drop, on the victim's head.

All noisy habits, such as walking heavily, banging doors, letting lids of trunks fall, and similar acts of carelessness, are wholly inconsistent with the character of a *gentle-woman*,—

a word far more significant than that of lady. Quietness and repose of manner, free from affectation and self-seeking, are the elements of true politeness. "*Love thyself last,*" says the poet, who knew more the beauties of the female character than any other human being; and a similar injunction is found in Holy Writ: "in honour preferring one another."

CHAP. X.

MORAL HONESTY.

"This is, I suppose, a benevolent place enough; all your great miserable towns are."

"Benevolent, but not just: very willing to give in charity; very unwilling to pay an honest price for honest labour. No one would applaud the master if he *paid* those poor wretches of his enough to live on: whereas, when he *gives* £500 in one subscription, the air is deafened with shouts."

THE MELVILLES.

SHALL I offend for ever some of my young friends by repeating to them a caution I once heard an excellent old lady give to a beloved and only daughter? "Above all, my child, be always honest; remember that to 'do justice' is a command which comes before that other, and more favourite one, to 'love mercy.'"

I dare say my countenance showed some of the astonishment I felt at hearing the mother of a most excellent and admirable girl caution

her to "be honest;" for the lady, turning to me, said:—

"Has it never struck you that there is much less moral honesty in the world than we are apt to think there is?—that we may appear very excellent members of society, and even have the reputation for being charitable, and yet indulge constantly in acts of dishonesty? There is a verse in the Bible which I have often pondered over, because it presents our human nature under an aspect so revolting that very few of us would be inclined to admit it to be a true one, were the authority at all less unquestionable. It is this: 'Rob not the poor, because he is poor.'"

If any of us were accused of such a crime, committed from so despicable a motive, we should indignantly deny its truth on behalf of our whole sex, as well as for ourselves; "to rob the poor, because he is poor," seems an outrage on humanity of which no professing Christian could possibly be guilty. And yet we know that there must be in human nature a tendency to commit this evil; else wherefore should He

who knows all hearts have uttered the command, and even enforced it by the assurance of retribution for its violation. "Rob not the poor, because he is poor, neither oppress the afflicted in the gate, for the Lord trieth their cause."

"And yet," I replied, "I hardly see in what way we rob, or even have the power to rob the poor."

"Perhaps not. But if we examine strictly our own conduct, and the motives which have actuated it, I fear very few of us will be able truly to declare themselves innocent of this sin. To rob, in the gross sense of the word, is of course out of the question; but does it not amount to the same thing if we withhold what is justly due—if we pay less than has been honestly earned—if we avail ourselves of any *might* that may be on our side to trample under foot the *rights* of the toiler, and in the emphatic language of Scripture, 'grind the faces of the poor?'"

Such a view of the case startled me into serious reflection, and I came reluctantly to the conclusion that we are indeed but too frequently

guilty of what I must term Moral Dishonesty. There is hardly one of us, however moderate her means, who has not occasion to employ the services of others yet humbler than herself. The seamstress, the laundress, the domestic, for instance: all these are people with whose assistance none of us can dispense. Do we never find ourselves calculating on their submitting to take something less than a fair price for their labours, rather than lose their employment? Do we never recommend any one, in something like these words, to a friend, "Oh, she is very poor, and will be glad to take almost anything." Is not this speech, so often and so thoughtlessly uttered, the very embodiment of the spirit denounced when we are forbidden to "rob the poor because he is poor."

The most general excuse for the spirit of chaffering would be that our means are limited, and that we are obliged to study economy—an excuse reasonable enough in itself, had it but the merit of being valid. But if our spirit of economy be excited by our knowledge of the necessities of the persons to be employed, and

our feeling that their fate is in some measure in our hands, I fear that our plea of poverty is no true one, since it is one we should never venture to advance with a fashionable marchande des modes, or indeed with any one whom we considered independent of our patronage. Is not this something like "robbing the poor because he is poor?" If we desire to make a purchase which is beyond our means, we have to sacrifice our wishes to our sense of probity; but if we wish to have work done, and cannot afford to do so at a fair price, we endeavour to induce the poor needlewoman to do it for a sum which will not procure her the barest necessaries of life. Would it not be better to do a part ourselves, and pay an honest price for the remainder, or to dispense with some unnecessary luxury, if by that means we can benefit our fellow-creatures? for it is no charity to give employment and to pay for that labour what will not keep body and soul together. This is merely self-indulgence, not benevolence.

But it may be objected, everybody tries to get work done cheaply, and it is optional for the

worker to decline what she does not think will pay her sufficiently. The first of these excuses does not deserve consideration. We are not to "follow the multitude to do evil," but to try not only our actions but their motives by the only unerring test we possess—by the revealed will of God.

The other excuse, however, appears so plausible that it may be worth while to investigate it. Unfortunately, in this overpeopled island, it is anything but optional with a worker to refuse employment if the remuneration is inadequate. The theory sounds extremely well, but facts contradict it. It may be safely assumed, that ninety-nine out of every hundred of the poorer classes are entirely dependent on their daily labour for their daily bread. A full half have others, near and dear ones, to maintain as well as themselves. There is a young widow, with children to feed and clothe, or a daughter who is toiling to give a sick father food and medicine, or a sister labouring for the orphan child of a dead relative. We have only to place ourselves in thought in the position of any one of these,

and endeavour to realise the terrible consequences of being even for a few days without employment, to feel that she has indeed little power to decline the most miserably paid labour, if nothing better offers; or to insist on more liberal remuneration, if the justice of her employer does not lead her to give it. No; she feels that she *must* take what is offered, or starve; and thus our selfish nature is confirmed, and very probably we even fancy ourselves extremely benevolent to give the employment at all.

But while discussing money matters, we must not forget another way in which the laws of moral honesty are violated, and of which the results are frequently not less calamitous. I mean in our dealings with tradespeople. We are all familiar with Miss Edgeworth's story of "*The Dun*," and have perhaps grieved over the peril to which the daughter was exposed, and the underserved misfortunes of the parents arising from the reckless extravagance of the gallant Colonel Pembroke. But has it ever occurred to us that perhaps we may, from

sheer thoughtlessness, be acting as guiltily, and causing equal misery? The system of credit which is granted to known customers is of itself an enormous evil in the commercial world; and it is notorious that half the bankruptcies that occur are caused by the impossibility of obtaining the bills of customers; but unfortunately this is not all. Many London houses in which the health of the principal is utterly destroyed by over toil and over anxiety, might be flourishing if those who are indebted to it would but pay their accounts. This is especially the case with such firms as have a large country connexion. Too many ladies fancy in giving orders they give all that is necessary, and withdraw their custom the moment their account is presented. A lady sends an order to a London house; she expresses an anxiety that it should be executed by return of post, and adds perhaps that the bill shall be paid immediately on her knowing the amount. To the honour of the British shopocracy, the desire is at once complied with, the style and writing of the note showing that it is the production of a gentle-

woman. With the goods the bill arrives. Is it settled at once? Very seldom. "The amount is so small, it is scarcely worth while to draw a Post-office order." "I shall be wanting some more things in a few weeks, and then I can pay for all at once." "It is such a trifle, it cannot be a matter of any consequence. I may as well leave it till I go to town." Now, in the first place, it is not honest to use that which, not being paid for, is not our own. In the next place, we are incurring a part of a responsibility which very few would desire if they considered its magnitude. We are greatly inconveniencing a person who has certainly obliged us; for we are probably one only of a number who are acting this dishonest part; and although two or three pounds may be of little consequence, even to a beginner, yet fifty such sums make a serious amount. You are probably destroying the credit of a person whom you would rather desire to assist, and you are injuring every one else with whom he may have future dealings; for it is not to be supposed that his confidence in the good faith of his customers will continue.

It is not my desire to harrow up the feelings of my readers, or I could give from my own knowledge such scenes of domestic misery, of destroyed health, ruined intellect, suicide, and death from this one cause alone, as would prevent every one of them from ever again committing this species of moral dishonesty. I could show the sick child, the darling of its parents' heart, pining to death for the fresh air which they cannot "get in those [illegible] I could point out the husband who [illegible] compelled to leave his young [illegible] without a protector, literally [illegible] by the want of the money ow- [illegible] from the very people, pro- [illegible] would send him up as a free [illegible] but up the cream from before a [illegible] who neglect to pay. I [illegible] servant, young, gentle, [illegible] servant as any of your- [illegible] this burden cruelly. [illegible] part of my subject. [illegible] a cur-

tion to all who have fallen into these errors from heedlessness, not intention; and that it is the head rather than the heart which is in fault in the majority of cases I have long been convinced. Your position may be humble, and your present influence small, or they may be very much the reverse; at all events, it is but reasonable to suppose that increasing years will give you a larger sphere of action and greater powers for good or for evil; but whatever your place in society, you have doubtless the wish to do good in it, and rely upon it, in paying your debts promptly, and giving a fair day's wages for an honest day's work, you will do more real benefit to society than you could effect by placing your name on the subscription lists of a dozen charities, if in doing so you neglected the more important duty. Remember, too, it is no longer the fashion to be in debt: the greatest lady in the land, who as woman, wife, and mother, is not less admirable than as Queen, sets an example in this respect that it would be happy indeed if all her subjects imitated. Never will her name be associated with aught but a

blessing by those who are happy enough to be employed by her. At fixed and short intervals all her Majesty's accounts are invariably paid, and it is said that the surest mode of incurring her displeasure is to omit sending in the bill at the proper date. What happy augury may we not draw of the character of our future Sovereign from the example he has before him of virtues which have not always graced a throne!

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There is a beautiful saying of the ancients, "De mortuus nil nisi bonam" (Let us say nothing but good of the dead). Pity that we do not adopt the motto with reference to those living-dead, the absent. How many a quarrel, how many heart-burnings, how much evil would be spared, if we habituated ourselves to speaking no evil of those who are not present to vindicate themselves! It is truly painful to witness the spirit of detraction which frequently pervades the conversation of a group of young ladies. What slighting, sneering expressions are used regarding the persons, minds, and tempers of

their absent companions! How every virtue and every beauty is qualified by some fatal "but," which has the effect of at once destroying its excellence! The mere tone of the voice is often sufficient to give the effect of an innuendo to words which in themselves are harmless. "How beautifully Miss S. plays!" "Yes, so she ought; for she spends half her time at the piano." "Did you see the exquisite drawings Miss V. brought from school last holidays?" "Yes; they are certainly admirable. I wonder if she could do them as well if the master were not at her elbow." Is there nothing *dishonest* in such speeches? Is there no stealing away of that which is infinitely more valuable than existence itself—the very life of life, our character? Certainly, though it is a crime against Nature to go out of our way to speak evil of the dead, it is not so injurious either to society or to ourselves as it is thus to give way to the propensity for slandering the living. Nor let us flatter ourselves that we injure others only. The injury we do ourselves by giving way to this spirit is incalculable. We cannot indulge our-

selves in such speeches without imbibing the spirit of the bitterness which they express; for although people are apt to excuse themselves by saying that they did not mean what they said, it is clear that had those feelings never existed in the heart they could not have found expression on the tongue. Moreover, there is so much self-esteem mingled with all our actions, we so greatly like to be acknowledged *right*, and so little wish to be proved *wrong* in our estimate of others, that having once expressed an opinion adverse to the character of any one, we almost rejoice in anything which may justify that opinion: we feel ourselves bound, in a manner, to maintain our own cause, even at the expense of truth and honesty; and I fear that if we had any proof of the incorrectness of our assertion, we should be inclined to refrain from giving it the same publicity which we did to our former.

Thus we see that the love of being in the right, which is a part of our human nature, may be so enlisted on the side of evil as to lead us into positive crime. On the other hand, if we make it a rule to ourselves to say nothing but

good of the absent, this same natural feeling will lead us to seek for and to perceive the excellences of the person we have been defending; and thus we shall acquire a habit of seeing the bright side of a friend's character instead of its imperfections. If, indeed, there are great errors in the conduct of one we love, and we cannot be blind to them, it is not our duty to justify those errors; but at the same time it is equally not our duty to bring them prominently before the eyes of others. If we speak of faults, it should be to those who commit them, privately and lovingly, in such a way as to show that it is sincere affection which leads us to fulfil a painful duty. But generally speaking this does not form any part of the duty of the young, who cannot be judges of the motives of others, of their position, their trials, or their circumstances. Be contented to watch your own heart, and the actions of your daily life, and assuredly you will find too much occupation in correcting your own deficiencies, to leave you much either of leisure or inclination for scanning the faults of others. Do not think that your example will

be without its weight in your own circle, however humble your position and small your influence. There is an old saying, and a very true one, "It takes more than one to make a quarrel." The proverb may be applied to scandal-mongering; for it is certain that if one of a party only is inclined to gossip, there will be very little harm done. It should be the aim of the better disposed or the more thoughtful to turn the conversation the moment the evil spirit of detraction makes its appearance, to introduce books, or music, or anything that will alter the current of thought. It is particularly the duty of a hostess to take this part; indeed, she is morally accountable for any evil-speaking that takes place in a society of young people under her parent's roof; since no guest could offer her such an affront as to continue a style of conversation that was obviously displeasing to her entertainer. Let the young hostess, therefore, feel that she is responsible for the conversation of her guests, and whilst exerting herself to procure them every possible amusement, let her show that any approach to

scandal will be offensive to her, and she will soon find that there are infinitely more interesting topics for discussion than the faults and follies of our neighbours.

Do not imagine that whilst thus avoiding injuring our neighbours we are doing no good to ourselves. If there is one cast of mind more certain to insure happiness than any other it is that which "thinks no evil," which habitually sees and seeks for the good points of others, and is more bent on seeking their happiness than its own. The bee sucks the honey, and rejects the poison presented to it; and it is our wisdom and happiness too to discover all the good we can in those about us, and to reject the evil, while, in contributing as much as we can to the welfare of our family, friends, and country, we acquire, by the very effort to do them good, a deeper interest in their welfare, and a warmer affection for them. So true it is that some of the strongest attachments the world exhibits have arisen from having conferred on another numerous and important benefits. We love those we have aided, more perhaps

than they love us,—and such is the constitution of human nature that we may confer kindnesses merely at first from a feeling of benevolence, we may defend the character of an absent person from the abstract sense of justice, but the very act itself will give us warm and kindly feelings to the person we have benefited, until our hearts are interested in their fate, and we continue from affection what we began from duty.

It is one great step gained, then, towards present and future happiness, to consider, in every transaction of life, whether we are acting in the spirit of entire honesty. Are we paying a just price to those we employ? Are we giving in charity whilst we are neglecting the requirements of justice? Are we, by our neglect of little accounts, embarrassing some honest tradesman, whose life depends on our punctuality? Are we, above all, allowing in ourselves a slighting, detracting mode of speaking of others? If so, there is a deficiency of moral honesty in our character which can only be supplied by the closest watchfulness of our

every thought, word, and action, aided by earnest prayer to Him who, having commanded us to "do justice," will not leave us unassisted in our endeavours to perform His will.

CHAP. XI.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS.

" Friendship's the wine of life.
Oh for the bright complexion, cordial warmth,
And elevating spirit of a friend."—YOUNG.

" Avec lumière et choix cette union veut naître
Avant de nous lier il faut mieux nous connaître."
MOLIÈRE.

PERHAPS not even the acceptance of a lover is a more important era in the life of a young girl than her first serious choice of a friend, since no two human beings can be closely associated together without being influenced by each other, either for good or for evil.

Of course I do not speak of those school attachments, lightly entered into and as lightly abandoned, the mere result of circumstances and propinquity, but of that serious selection of a counsellor, confidante, and better self, which every young girl wishes to find in her bosom companion.

Very few indeed are so isolated as to have no such dear companion, and very few natures exist which could dispense with one; for we all need something or some one whom we may love on terms of equality, and to whose affection we may look for such tenderness as we fancy we shall not find in older and sterner beings. Nature would appear to point out sisters whose age approximates to our own as the beings specially calculated to be our friends; and certainly instances are not wanting of the strongest and tenderest union existing between two sisters. And in whom can a young girl expect to find so much indulgence for her failings, so much affection and partial regard for her person and mind, such complete union of interests, as in a sister just so much older than herself that she may act as a guide and mentor, but not so old that she cannot enter into the joyous feelings of youth. Child of the same parents, united by early association, by oneness of interest, by every tie of blood and sentiment of nature, a sister seems given especially to be a friend to a sister. Some, however, are not blessed with such a re-

lation at all; in others, difference of years and of temperament preclude that intimate and equal union which belongs to friends; and whatever the cause, the result is certain, that very many young girls select their friends from amongst comparative strangers.

I have used the word *select* advisedly, because friendship, to be worthy of the name, must be a *distinguishing* regard. We must know why we love, if our affection is to be of the slightest value.

How then is a young girl to select a friend? What are the qualities you may reasonably desire her to possess? Do you see in your proposed confidante a dutiful daughter, a kind sister, a gentle and charitable acquaintance? You may feel sure that in acquiring the friendship of such a being you acquire an invaluable blessing. But if, on the other hand, you choose your friend only because you imagine she likes or admires *you;* if you hear her speak snappishly to her own sister, or in the spirit of detraction of some casual acquaintance, ask yourself what there can be in *you* so to enchain her

affections that she will not censure you behind your back, or utter some harsh speech to your face, when the novelty of your acquaintance has worn off?

In forming a friendship, be sure you are not led away by flattery: whether want of judgment or want of truth be the cause of an acquaintance praising you for virtues you do not possess, and for making light of errors you are conscious of having committed, such a woman, however agreeable as an acquaintance, cannot be safe as a friend. On the other hand, has she differed from you in opinion, or pointed out an error in your judgment—not to others, but to yourself in the intimacy of a tête-à-tête, you may feel that reliance on her truth which will insure at least that necessary ingredient in every durable affection. It is true, *esteem* is a sentiment which does not include love; but there can be no real love without esteem. To unite two rational beings in the bonds of friendship there must be some similarity of characters, tastes, and feelings, and last, but not least, some equality in position. Some beings are so

happily gifted that to know is to love them: they carry such a charm about with them that

> "Friends in all the aged they meet,
> And lovers in the young."

But few comparatively are gifted with this winning way, and the majority of womankind certainly have to prove their regard for others if they would elicit kindly feelings in return. The duties of friendship are reciprocal. If we expect truth from others, we must practise it ourselves; and this we are far from doing as completely to comparative strangers as to our own relatives. The fact is, there is a vast deal of involuntary deception in the world. So natural is it to wish to stand well with the world, that unconsciously we put on a different manner, as well as dress, for visitors. Is not this true? Do we not control our tempers to strangers, and pass over an act of carelessness as a misfortune, and show a degree of interest in a stupid story, and in many other ways exert ourselves to please them, when we would neither incur the exertion, nor endure the restraint, for the sake of our own family. Is it not a pity that such

things should occur? that we should think less of the happiness of those with whom our lives are to be passed than of those whose acquaintance may end to-morrow. Thus, in fact, we appear to the stranger in a character totally different from our real one; nor have we any right to reproach an acquaintance with inconsistency if she withdraws herself from one who proves, on a nearer view, a perfectly different person to her whose amiability and flattery first aroused a sentiment of regard. There can be no stability in any union in which deception forms the basis; it is therefore wise and politic, no less than honourable, to *appear* what we are, or at all events, not knowingly to assume virtues we are conscious of not possessing, for the sake even of gaining a *friend*.

Another leading cause of the breaking up of half the friendships of girls is the familiarity with which they treat each other. Never was there a truer saying than that one, "Too much familiarity breeds contempt." To many persons no positive amount of vice is more repulsive than a free, bravadoing familiarity, which vio-

lates without the smallest apology all recognised rules of society. Cowper says—

> "The friend who calls you Tom and Jack,
> And proves (by thumps upon your back)
> How he esteems your merit:
> Is such a friend, that one had need
> Be very much his friend indeed,
> To pardon or to bear it."

And the poet was right. No amount of intimacy can excuse or sanction a deliberate neglect of the courtesies of life. To intrude, *bongré, malgré,* into the private apartments of a friend, —to criticise her dress and appearance,—above all, to be guilty of any of those romping ebullitions of spirits which may be pardonable in a very young girl at school, but which are not expected in young women, all these are violations of taste and propriety which no wish to remain friendly can be sufficiently strong to counterbalance. Indeed, a girl of sense, with a real feeling of regard for her friend, will not only feel hurt on her own account by such want of breeding, but she will be grieved at the impression such conduct must make on the general society. No real friend can possibly wish to see the

being she loves degraded in the esteem of others. It is a part of real affection to be unselfish—to desire the welfare of the beloved rather than its own; and the same love which will enable a girl to pardon the errors of her friend will make her solicitous beyond anything for their correction. If then you are so happy as to find such a friend,

"Grapple her to thy soul with hooks of steel."

Guard your own conduct towards her, and let it justify her regard. Endeavour to let all your reunions have some improving tendency; make a resolution (and keep to it) that scandal and detraction form no part of your occupation when together, but rather seek for some intellectual subject of mutual interest to discuss, some book to read, or some piece of music to practise, which shall occupy you more profitably than talking of the concerns of others.

When, as it sometimes happens, you are the friend of two young ladies who are mutually acquainted,—perhaps even more intimately than you are with either of them,—you may have a part to act which will give you the power of doing considerable good or evil. In such cir-

cumstances, remember, that to reveal to one what the other did not intend should be revealed, is a breach of confidence only to be justified by some very powerful motive. If you are doubtful whether it is a matter of *duty* to repeat a certain conversation, or relate such an action, examine your own motives rigidly. Ask yourself whether it be not rather a love of importance, or a mere liking for scandal, than anything else which tempts you to speak. Ask yourself what *good* can result from the revelation; and bethink yourself of the "blessing" pronounced on peacemakers. "The tale-bearer," says the Bible, "revealeth secrets; but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth a matter." If your spirit be a *faithful* one, you will hesitate long before you make known to one person what is said by another; you should be very well convinced not only that it is right it should be known, but that you are the right and fit person to give the information, before you venture on opening the floodgates of strife.

The silly *jealousy* which some girls affect towards those for whom they profess regard would

be almost too absurd for notice, did we not see annoying results occasionally arise from it.

To wish to monopolise the attention and the conversation of one we profess to be attached to is to prove, not our love, but our *self*-love.

> "True love in this differs from gold and clay,
> That, to divide, is not to take away.
> Love is like understanding, which grows bright
> Gazing on many truths."

The affection of those who, being surrounded by a large circle of acquaintances and relatives, yet profess a kindly feeling only to one or two, is greatly to be doubted.

In your own family, even more than among strangers, a nice attention to politeness is incumbent on you. To address brothers or sisters with less courtesy than visitors is an error of judgment no less than of feeling. Indeed, it may be laid down as a rule, that the *more intimate* the association, the greater need there is for punctilious politeness; and I may observe that the practice of it is quite as beneficial to the recipient as to the actor.

Avoid all roughness of language in your in-

tercourse with your family. Civility costs nothing, but it endears those who practise it to all about them.

Towards sisters, however, something more than mere politeness is required. Members of the same family, and generally brought up together, it is wonderful that any cause of disunion should ever arise between them. That it is so is greatly to be deplored, and much may be done to avoid it. In the first place, let each one remember that the Almighty, who has made every leaf of a tree to differ from the others, has created human beings all with various tempers and peculiarities. Some may be in accordance with our own; some may be peculiarly disagreeable; but we may be very sure that every one has some virtue, which we have only to seek to discover, whilst a knowledge of our own hearts will tell us this great fact, that we can never see in the conduct of others so much evil as we know to exist in our own hearts. Self-knowledge will teach us to think very humbly of ourselves and very gently of others; and what can conduce to domestic happiness more than this spirit?

A habit of criticising others, and finding fault with them, even in jest, is so apt to develope itself into an odious spirit of gossip and scandal that no young girl who values happiness will indulge in it. To some the gift of uttering witty speeches offers a great temptation to indulge in this pernicious habit.

> "The 'girl' renowned for repartee
> Will seldom scruple to make free
> With friendship's finest feeling;
> Will thrust a dagger in your breast,
> And say she wounded you in jest,
> By way of balm for healing."

But such a girl cannot expect to be beloved, even by her own family: it remains for her to determine whether it is worth while to lose her friend for the sake of a bon-mot.

Practical jokes should always be avoided by those who seek domestic happiness. Seldom do they prove a source of enjoyment to any but the perpetrators, and to many they will give deadly offence.

Infirmities of temper are a great misfortune, but infinitely more to the transgressor than to those who suffer the wrong. What can equal

the remorse we feel when conscious that some ebullition of violence has degraded us, and alienated, perhaps for ever, some one whom we really love? How often are real nobleness and a spirit of self-sacrifice associated with a violent temper! and how many efforts are frequently made to repair an evil committed! Too frequently, however, sisters appear to have a pleasure in aggravating this irritability. They think it "fine fun" to see Mary or Ellen in a rage. Is this womanly? Were that sister suffering from bodily illness, her tormentors would probably be the first to soothe her. Are the maladies of the mind less painful or less difficult of cure? Shall the wound be increased by the hand of a sister? Forbid it womanhood, Christianity, every sisterly virtue and sentiment.

On the other hand, to indulge in such a temper as I am speaking of, or even under great provocation to give way to it, is sadly wrong. We may, in a fit of temper, commit some act, or utter some speech, for which we shall never forgive ourselves, though the sufferer may pardon us. The uncertainty of life ought, in itself, to

be a powerful motive to us to restrain our tempers, since who shall say that the friend we have wounded will live to grant, or we to receive pardon?

The spirit (misnomered a high one) which will not suffer a fallible mortal to confess her fallibility, and to say, "I am sorry" for a fault, is one, in fact, of the most paltry that can be displayed: an error confessed will always meet with pardon; but who shall believe a girl repentant whose looks, words, and attitudes breathe defiance rather than regret? Repentance is, indeed, frequently all the reparation we can offer to our fellow-creatures.

A spirit of detraction, a trick of saying little spiteful things about our young companions, is so common among our sex, that, to our shame be it spoken, the whole race of women are branded with it. In fact, for one woman to admit any perfection in another, or miss the opportunity of uttering some tale of scandal against her, is extremely rare. Say that a girl is unquestionably lovely—her dress is said to be in bad taste, or her hand is too large, or—in

short, there is always something to find fault with. Now, we do not find this petty spirit in the other sex; a man who condescended to such meanness would be hooted out of society. I believe, really, women do this more for the sake of *talking* than from the wish to do mischief; and therefore especially it is well for them to cultivate their minds, and so find some better subject for their tongues.

Much may be done by one or two young people, really resolute to stop this scandal. Some absent friend is spoken of slightingly; let those who know and love her produce some *contrary* evidence; let them speak of her good qualities, and, in short, show the reverse of the medal. Example will be found as contagious in good as in evil.

A sister's duties to a brother are of the most important character. Never should she lose sight of the fact that he has far more temptation to wander than herself, and that it is wisdom and happiness so to render his home attractive that he will not seek pleasure elsewhere. Take an interest in his pursuits; listen to his tales

of his companions; be ready to put away a favourite book or piece of work, if by playing a game at chess, or accompanying him on the piano, you can please and oblige him. In a thousand ways you can show your affection and regard; do not lose an opportunity of doing so. Be ready to receive in good part any advice he may give you. Even if not much older than yourself, he probably knows far more of the world; and a man's *sister* is so sacred and hallowed a being to him, that many things he would pass over in others he would feel pained by her doing.

Younger brothers should be especial objects of a sister's tenderness at the age when they are rather considered in the way of every one else. That is the time when they may be most warmly attached; and who shall say what is the blessing of being really beloved by a brother?

In your intercourse with parents, it should be your aim to share their troubles, diminish their cares, and soothe their sufferings. Too often a sort of separate interest arises between parent and child; the father, especially, is looked upon

more as a sort of banker than in any other light. All this is wrong, and can conduce only to misery. How many of a parent's anxieties would be lessened, did the daughters either aid in the house or in the business; did they feel that "good to thee includes good to me;" that if the income is a limited one, a little exertion on the daughter's part might save, if it did not add to the amount; that strangers need not be employed in offices of trust, when daughters, able and willing, could take their place!

That much abused class, servants, would share with others in the benefits of the new order of things. Constituted as society is just now, with a majority of beings who are so proud of being ladies that they forget all the duties of womanhood, it is rather a wonder that servants, as a class, should not be worse, rather than that they are no better. Can anything exceed the thoughtlessness with which strong healthy girls frequently tax the exhausted, wearied servant to do something for them which they could do far better for themselves? And then the ungracious thanks, or no thanks, the poor girl gets!

Servants may torment us, but we do a great deal ourselves towards teaching them to do so. We expect all sorts of virtues and excellencies from them, with their limited education, that we should find it hard to practise ourselves.

The young ladies in a family should be ready not only to check accounts and make a pie or pudding, and give out the linen, and so forth, but they should be able to show a servant how to do every part of her work, to scrub a room, and clean a knife, if necessary. If you have not learned this, the sooner you do so the better. All these domestic duties are particularly incumbent on those who intend emigrating; and indeed to *all* who wish to be wives, mothers, and mistresses of families, this will be found the most valuable of all knowledge. Men cannot marry now-a-days, because a wife is really too expensive a luxury. A girl has no idea of either earning or saving. How, then, can a prudent man think of marrying? Dickens' child-wife, Dora, is not, I fear, quite such a fancy sketch as she is supposed; but with the greater intelligence of the age larger views ought to be taken of these mat-

ters, and girls should be educated to meet the probable requirements of their position.

Home! sweet home! Cultivate a love of innocent pleasure, of the happiness that can be enjoyed without the accessories of an evening dress and a crowd of strangers. Let the hospitality exercised be rather frequent than magnificent. Rooms never used but for parties—a whole household disarranged for weeks for the sake of receiving, once a year, five hundred dear friends —close economy practised in private for the sake of ostentation in public—these are vulgarisms which are too often instigated by daughters, and always submitted to by parents from a kind though mistaken view to their interests. Show your parents that these are not the pleasures you covet; be occupied, and therefore happy, in your own family, and rely on it, that the world will be a fairer and better thing to you than to less sensible women.

"Wouldst thou the purest pleasures know?
Above, around, beneath thee look!
E'en at thy very feet they grow,
And sparkle in the humblest brook.

There's not a green sequestered nook,
If decked with one sweet flower of spring,
But nature, in her mighty book,
Hath marked it as a joyous thing.

Old is the thought, the moral trite,
(But oh, how slighted and forgot!)
That Nature's glories give delight
The glories of the world cannot.
How much of beauty, grace, and joy
Lie clasped within a folded rose!
Nay, of delight that will not cloy
In the last trembling flower that blows.

In love, in truth, in knowledge lie
Our noblest strength, our richest wealth:
What painted gaud of art can vie
With Nature's rose of joy and health?
No pearl was e'er the diver's prize,
No gem the toiling miner's meed,
Like the pure light from virtue's eyes,
Which God makes beautiful indeed!"

CHAP. XII.

FEMININE FOIBLES.

"Since trifles make the sum of human things,
And half our misery from our 'foibles' springs:
Since life's best joys consist of peace and ease,
And few can save, or serve, but all may please,—
Oh let th' ungentle spirit learn from hence
A small unkindness is a great offence."

MISS H. MORE.

THERE are certain cant phrases in the world which have more influence on us than they ought to have, or than they would possess, were we coolly to investigate their signification. Amongst these stands that very equivocal sentence, "A proper pride." To inculcate a sentiment of "proper pride" in a young woman, seems so universal that we are almost tempted to suppose there existed an eleventh commandment that we should be proud. But the advice is bad or good just according to the sense in which we take the words. What is a proper

pride? Is it that honourable self-respect which would forbid our doing anything contrary to our profession as Christian gentlewomen,—which would prevent us from condescending to act or tell a falsehood, or in any way countenance deception? which would forbid our prying into the secrets of others,—glancing over an open letter,—or putting a leading question to a dependant, or any one supposed to be in a secret? Is it that true courage which would induce us to own poverty and not be ashamed of it,—to confess that we cannot afford to join in some party of pleasure or scheme of amusement, because we are not so rich as our companions? —if *this* be our pride, it is an honourable feeling.

But if our "proper pride," on the contrary, leads us only to make use of all sorts of devices to keep up appearances, but tempts us into acts of meanness or extravagance, in order to appear well with the world; or if it causes us to blush at being discovered in some homely domestic occupation, or endeavouring to add to the comforts of our parents by our labour, this feeling is

anything but a desirable one; on the contrary, it is a sentiment which should be repressed by all our most strenuous exertions, since nothing tends more to destroy the peace of families than this most unhappy "*false pride*." In matters of importance it frequently injures us most seriously. Thousands of women who are now eating the bitter bread of dependence in the miserable undefined position of "poor relations," might be earning a comfortable livelihood, respected by others and happy in themselves, could they but persuade themselves to lay aside their false pride. In matters of trivial consequence the effects of this pride are more often ludicrous to spectators than otherwise. A girl, with no pretension to high rank or station, cannot be seen doing this, or that, or the other thing; she cannot carry a parcel, or make a pudding, or do any other useful act, because it is not "genteel," forgetting that the conduct and the manners prove the gentlewoman, and that a *lady* will always be recognised as such, no matter what her occupation or her toilette.

Now the error here is no less an one than

WANT *of* PRINCIPLE. Did we accustom ourselves to consider simply *what is right*, instead of what is fashionable, what God will approve rather than what our acquaintances will admire, we should furnish ourselves with such a rule of right that no sophistry could lead us into error. But women are peculiarly apt to be led by *custom*, and to find "everybody does so-and-so" a sufficient excuse for doing wrong themselves.

For this reason they sacrifice so much to appearances, and involve themselves in all sorts of difficulties to outshine their acquaintances in dress, entertainments, and expense.

For no better reason than the dread of the sneers of the foolish they too frequently refuse the means of honourable independence, lest they should be looked down upon by those whose good opinion, assuredly, is not worth having. For this paltry "What will the world say?" unhappily they will also allow themselves to be entangled in a course of danger and difficulty, and be led in many ways to violate the dictates of their conscience to please some one whose approbation they prefer to that of their own heart.

There can be but one safe guide to us in any matter in which the opinion of the world is involved. Is it in accordance with the Bible, or in violation of it? Ask yourself this question, and, having answered it to your own satisfaction, let nothing induce you to swerve from the right path.

It is a great pity that the principle of honour, which is inculcated so strenuously in the education of men should have so little place in that of our sex. Men are restrained from many contemptible acts by their being stamped as "dishonourable:" in the absence of a higher motive, this ought to suffice for women also, since the propagation of a tale of scandal, the indulgence of curiosity (proverbially feminine!), and many other paltry actions, prohibited to them from childhood, are certainly quite as disgraceful in women as they can be in men, and often even more mischievous.

Another feminine propensity, always indicating want of sense, and often leading to want of principle, is a love of bargains. "Tremendous sacrifice!" "Selling off under prime cost!"

seem to have charms for the most rational of our countrywomen. To get a bargain is the glory of many a woman; and the announcement of a sale seems a signal for her to set aside all considerations of prudence for the sake of a purchase.

Now, were women to have the power only over their own money, it would signify little to any one but themselves how uselessly they might spend it; but as the funds of others are frequently under their control, this *love of spending* becomes a serious evil.

In shopping, make up your mind as to what you want before you set out, ask for it in as clear terms as you can, and resolve not to see anything you do not want. It will save you from temptation, and the shopkeeper from loss of time and disappointment; for what can be more annoying,—nay, even more dishonest, than to occupy the morning of the assistants in a shop, and then walk off, without, by any adequate purchase, remunerating them for their loss of time? It is one of the most heartless and unprincipled things a woman can do; and it is

just one of those things that men always cite as instances of the selfishness and want of principle of the sex.

AFFECTATION is another feminine foible, quite as productive of misery as any other. Fears of the most harmless animals or insects, fear of the sight of a wound, and a thousand other affected terrors, are either assumed solely for the purpose of looking interesting, or, if *real*, are the result of a bad habit, fostered by injudicious treatment. Now, did the mischief of this affectation end in merely disgusting the sensible and displeasing the wise, it would be quite bad enough; but there are very few of us who, at some portion or other of our existence, may not be placed in circumstances where our own lives and those of others may be endangered by the want of presence of mind; and if we do not strive to command ourselves in little dangers, we cannot rely upon our nerve when in the presence of real peril.

Depend upon it the women whose courage and heroism have formed the glory and pride of our sex had habituated themselves to self-control at

all times; and had not to learn, when death stared them in the face, how to control their fears and put their energies to account. When Miss Fearon (Lady Palmer) kept by her gallant father's side as he stood on the burning deck of the "KENT," and saw every man and woman into the boats before they prepared for their own escape, think you it was her *first* effort to control the natural timidity of woman? Was it not rather the effect of long self-discipline, as well as natural courage? True, some natures are naturally more fearless than others; but whilst the bravest may allow themselves to become cowards if they lose their self-control, it only needs a strong will to enable even the timid to show courage in the time of danger.

Only the beginnings of evil, in this as in all other follies, must be checked. Habituate yourself to preserving your presence of mind in the trifling alarms which are continually occurring. Seek to be calm and resolute in the midst of peril, which is a very different thing to rushing needlessly into danger. Remember there is no natural defect of character which re-

solution and perseverance will not conquer. Demosthenes, one of the greatest orators of ancient times, had naturally a defect in his speech; Nelson, our great admiral, never throughout his career went to sea without suffering from *mal de mer*. To less brave and resolute spirits such constitutional defects would have been insurmountable difficulties. Does our feminine fear present a more insurmountable obstacle?

Yet some women, from giving way to idle apprehensions, become a real torment to themselves and a source of annoyance and danger to others.

Only recently a boat was upset and the lives of a boating party were endangered by the folly of one girl jumping up in the boat. Every one of the party was immersed in the water, and narrowly escaped drowning. What would have been the self-reproaches of the cause of this calamity had fatal consequences ensued?

I know more than one lady with whom it is positive pain to drive in a cab. Not another vehicle approaches, but a little shriek announces

the fact; not a corner is turned, but your arm is seized, and she exhibits every symptom of hysterics. Is not this contemptible folly? She cannot help it now, it is true; but, had she checked herself as a girl, could she not have learned to control her fears and prevent exclamations the more foolish that they are far more likely to accelerate than to prevent a catastrophe?

In illness, also, the want of self-command endangers many a valuable life. In fact, there are no circumstances of danger or difficulty in which calm resolution and courage will not be of benefit, and weak cowardice injurious to you. Study, therefore, in little things to maintain perfect self-possession—vulgarly speaking, to have all your wits about you. The habit will be invaluable when real danger presents itself. Never, either from weakness or the wish to be interesting, give way to these feminine weaknesses, and remember that the poet says,

> "And yet, believe me, good as well as ill,
> Woman's at best a contradiction still!
> Heaven, when it strives to polish all it can,
> Its last, best work, but forms a *softer* man."

CHAP. XIII.

DEPENDENCE OR INDEPENDENCE?

'Seest thou a man diligent in his business, he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men."

THE history of all ages abounds with examples of reverses of fortune by which the prince is reduced to beggary, and the labourer becomes possessed of untold wealth. In a great commercial country like England, such vicissitudes of fortune are even more common than among many other nations. How many of the greatest as well as the wealthiest men of the past and the present generation have risen from the most obscure position, and by genius or indomitable industry, or by extraordinary commercial talent and unflinching rectitude, have made for themselves a position among the greatest and noblest of the land!

But inasmuch as it is ever easier to descend a

mountain than to climb to its summit, so there are many more examples of loss of fortune than of winning its great prizes. Very few of us but could point out in our own immediate circle families who, from a state of comparative affluence, are reduced to circumstances which compel them to economise in every possible way; who first laid down their carriages, then dismissed one or two servants, and finally have been obliged to seek to earn as well as to save; when the education which has been given to the daughters, and any talents which they are presumed to possess, begin to be considered as a part of their still remaining property, a source of income to themselves and families.

And happy, indeed, may those daughters be considered, who in such a season of trial discover that they have the power of alleviating the cares and contributing to the comforts of their parents. Happy, too, the parents who have so trained the minds and cultivated the hearts of their children, as to have earned that filial love and affectionate devotion which will make the hardest trial a pleasure, and the most painful

duty a privilege. If affliction serves to elicit the grateful devotion of our family, it is indeed but a blessing in disguise.

To return, however, to the subject with which our chapter is headed—Dependence or Independence? We will suppose that from any vicissitude of fortune a young lady finds herself under the necessity of earning her own living, or contributing her share to the general expenses of the family. The first earnest question naturally is, "What shall I do?" and the reply almost invariably, "I must become a governess." It may safely be assumed, in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred, that the career of a governess is the one chosen both by the débutante and her friends. Various reasons may be assigned for this predilection, but the principal are, first, the good education the young lady has received; and secondly, the prevalent idea that the position of a governess is superior in respectability to any other by which a woman can earn a livelihood. There is some truth, and a good deal of error in both these assumptions. A girl's education may have been very good, and

her abilities may be equal to those of the generality of her young friends—nay, she may even possess very superior talents, and more than ordinary acquirements, and she may still be entirely unfit for the position of a governess. To know, and to be able to communicate knowledge, are two very different things, and by no means necessarily coexistent. It is very difficult, however, to convince a young girl of this truth. In her idea, to have learned and to be able to teach are synonymous. Hence, she always assumes that she is competent to undertake the duties of a governess, although it may happen that she never, in her life, gave a lesson, or bestowed one thought on education.

But the greatest reason why the career of a governess is selected is the idea that no other is open to *a gentlewoman*. To accept any other would be to lose caste; therefore, however unfit a girl may be for so trying a situation, however delicate her health, however unregulated her temper, however inferior her attainments, if she is to earn her bread at all, she must do so as a governess, because she and her family would be

degraded by her entering trade. In very many cases, indeed, parents will stint themselves and limit in every way their own comfort, to educate their daughters at an expensive boarding-school, with the view to their afterwards becoming governesses, in the hope of their improving their social position by mingling in society superior to that of their father's house, and forming connexions in a rank above their own.

This sort of reasoning sounds so well, yet has so little truth to justify it, that it reminds me exceedingly of the definition of a crab which was nearly inserted in the dictionary of the French Academy. It was described as "a red fish that walks backwards." An eminent naturalist to whose criticism it was submitted before going to press, observed, "Your description is admirable, it has only three trifling errors—it is not red, it is not a fish, and it does not walk backwards."

It is altogether an error to suppose that because a girl is a governess that therefore she is a gentlewoman, or that (though the title may be really her due) she is treated as one. It is not

because she is called *Miss* So-and-so, and has a seat at the table of her employers, or because she is introduced to society in the drawing-room, or even because her duties are among the most important in the world—because she stands, or ought to stand, as second only to the mother in her authority over her young charges, and because their happiness in life and that of all who love them depends much on the efficient or inefficient manner in which her duty is discharged, that the young governess is, generally speaking, considered as the equal and confidential friend she ought to be. The theory is beautiful, but the facts are against us. Nor can we greatly wonder at the false position which governesses hold when we consider how often they are induced by merely selfish and sordid motives to seek the employment which they ought to engage in only from a conviction of their fitness, mental and moral, for so important a post. If we would be respected, we must respect ourselves.

The calling of a governess is not unlike that of a clergyman; the duties of both are so ar-

duous that no mere salary can ever adequately repay their faithful discharge. And as money cannot repay it, so mere money, or personal aggrandisement, should not be the only object in engaging in that career. Duty which is not undertaken from a higher motive will never be really well performed.

It is not, therefore, altogether the fault of employers that a governess does not command that consideration in a house which we think ought to be conceded to her. The candidates for every situation are so numerous, and their deficiencies, frequently, so palpable, that the profession has sunk in the public esteem. Indeed, when parents, from good feeling or policy, treat the young governess with kindness and respect, her own conduct too frequently is such that she does not retain their regard,—her pride or petulance, or her ignorance, revolts them,—and when she quits her situation they begin on a different system with her successor, being disgusted with the specimen they have had of a governess.

And thus, in a great measure, the position of a governess, instead of being really as honour-

able as it ought to be, has become so equivocal that, in vulgar language, the instructress of the family is said to be "neither fish, flesh, nor fowl;" in fact, above the kitchen, and beneath the drawing-room. Stories have been told, and novels written, illustrative of the ill-treatment of governesses; and so well are the mortifications and trials of this mode of life known, that it is truly astonishing any one should voluntarily select it. The love of supposed *gentility* must be great indeed when it can induce loving mothers and proud fathers to counsel their children to encounter coldness and contempt—often positive hardship—to attain it. But, as we are addressing young people only, and not their employers, we would not have dwelt upon the drawbacks in the life of a governess, but in defence of our position that the situation of a governess is not necessarily that of a gentlewoman. That governesses are not well treated is a fact patent to the world; we believe it to be in a great measure their own fault, not individually but as a body. If false pride and a corrupt ambition lead girls to enter on a career

for which they are unfit—one which requires the highest order of character—the natural consequence is, that the profession is degraded; nor will it ever regain its proper position until parents become alive to the necessity of requiring something yet higher and rarer than an acquaintance with three or four languages, and as many instruments, in the teachers of their children; and young ladies learn that whilst it is a folly to accept any engagement for the duties of which they are not competent, it is worse than a folly—it is a crime—to do so, when their incompetency may have a fatal influence on the characters and the future happiness of those of whom they thus recklessly undertake the responsibility.

If, then, they do not feel their own characters as well as acquirements to be such as fit them for the important post of governesses, let them by all means choose some other employment. "But what employment is open to us in which we shall not lose caste? We cannot embark in trade; we should cease to be considered as ladies," is immediately the cry. Can anything be

more truly absurd than such reasoning as this, in a country whose commerce is her pride and boast? Can any argument be more thoroughly inconsistent? The father and brothers of a young girl may be immersed in the details of business from morning until night, yet suffer under no social disability; there is no position to which they may not aspire, provided their business makes them wealthy; and yet the ladies of the family must think all allusion to *the shop* a discredit, and must on no account occupy themselves with it. A woman would degrade herself at once by it. Why should it be so? Would elegant manners and a cultivated mind be *dis*qualifications for business? So far from it, that in a man they would be considered as great acquisitions. Assuredly we need not cease to be gentlewomen because we are engaged in commerce, nor shall we be thought to have done so by any whose opinion is worth having. With the world in general, indeed, we have only to succeed to be honoured; and we may be quite sure that the position of a successful *tradeswoman* will, by nine-tenths of our acquaintances,

be estimated above that of a poor governess. Indeed it is only in business that we have any chance of realising an independence for our old age, or of increasing to any considerable amount the comforts of parents or others dependant upon our exertions. Nor is it unworthy of consideration that even the subordinates in many trades have, from the nature of their employment, advantages that no teacher can hope to possess. The young governess has an amount of responsibility which cannot fail to be deeply impressed upon the mind of every conscientious teacher. It does not even end with her engagement, since the results of good or bad tuition terminate only with life itself. Thus she is not merely labouring from morning until night, but her *mind* is on the stretch after her daily toil is over. Even Sunday shines no Sabbath-day to her, as far as mental relaxation is concerned, for those only who have experienced it can tell the positive exertion as well as the anxiety of escorting two or three unruly children to church, restraining their fidgetiness, compelling their attention, and yourself maintaining the

feelings of devotion at the same time. Then there are the Sunday duties to be performed at home, and which the governess must superintend, and the long tedious evening (as children often think it) to be suitably occupied. Were it not for the satisfaction of feeling we are fulfilling a duty, we should indeed weary of such a routine. Very different indeed is the position of an assistant in a business. Her Sunday is at least her own, when she may enjoy the transitory rest undisturbed. She frequents the parish church, and her thoughts and feelings of devotion are unfettered, her leisure is spent probably in the bosom of her family, or in the delicious tranquillity of her own room: she has no responsibility except for herself. In the dull season she has a holiday of a few weeks, during which she is entirely free; and at its termination she can resume her labours with renewed energy. Her intercourse is with minds superior to her own, with people older and better acquainted with the world, and every day some lesson may be learned. I am supposing a young person holding a situation in

apprenticeship is necessary, except in some very extraordinary circumstances. The time of apprenticeship depends on the age and capabilities of the young lady, from one to three years being the average. The amount of premium depends on the standing of the house receiving you, and also on the treatment of the young people; for it is obvious that where reasonable hours of rest and relaxation are granted, where food is good and abundant, and the accommodation is healthy and comfortable, a higher premium should be paid than where the reverse of all this is the case.

It is chiefly, however, in millinery establishments that too long hours and bad accommodation are to be feared; and in very many it is notorious the food is so indifferent that the young people have to spend considerable sums in mere necessaries. There is another cruelty sometimes practised; no meals, except breakfast, are provided on Sunday. It is hardly possible to speak with sufficient severity of a practice so dishonest and so calculated to injure the moral character as well as the comfort of the

young women employed. But in all engagements made, this question should be satisfactorily answered: "Shall I be at liberty to remain at home on Sunday, and shall I have proper accommodation there if I do?"

But all duties are reciprocal. If the proprietor of an establishment has his, you have also yours; and young people are too apt to forget the injunction to serve "not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart serving the Lord." Very many do not care how little they do, provided they get through the day or the week without their idleness being found out. They take every opportunity to violate rules; they rise later than the prescribed time, or trifle away time that belongs to their master; or perhaps they grumble at working a little beyond the prescribed hour, when on some rare occasion the necessities of business demand extra exertion. It is such unfaithfulness as this which sometimes converts an indulgent master or mistress into a severe one. The head of an establishment may be inclined to leniency and consideration, and may do her best to render her subor-

dinates happy; but if not met by them in a like liberal spirit, she will finish by thinking her system false, and adopt, almost perforce, the less kindly rules which appear to secure better service. A sort of faithfulness which is also very incumbent on young ladies in business is that which will lead them to disclose any decided error on the part of a companion. By this I do not mean that silly or malicious gossip, which is vulgarly termed tittle-tattle; but where we see very bad conduct persisted in, after warning, it is our duty to inform the principals of it; and the knowledge that one girl will do so will prove a great check on all the others. Sometimes it requires no small amount of courage to do this, or to enforce exertion, neatness, and obedience on the juniors; it almost appears amiable to hide their faults, and when we hide them to give an opportunity for amendment; and while endeavouring to bring that amendment about, it really is so. But if, on the other hand, it is to save ourselves from trouble, or from the annoyance of being called mischief-makers, it ceases to be a virtue. It is as much an act of

[redacted]

future, and thus to create a kindly feeling between yourself and your employer, or to use the "grievous words" which will as certainly "stir up strife." Your employer may be wrong; but if so your vindication can do no good; but very likely she is right. Whoever employs the services of others has an undoubted right to prescribe the way in which those services shall be performed; you are bound, in all lawful things, to pay implicit obedience. And a little right consideration of the anxieties inseparable from business, from which the assistants are happily exempt, will induce a kindly feeling which will lead you to avoid increasing the vexations of those about you. In this, as in all else, follow the golden rule, and be sure that you will reap the reward of your conduct.

Industry, sense, and temper may be considered the three requisites for success in business. Next to them we must rank aptitude for calculation. No one who is not an expert arithmetician need hope to do any good in trade. It is a great pity that the science of book-keeping is not made a more prominent study with the

young ladies of the present day. Very many would be earning liberal salaries who can now barely find bread. Why should not an Englishwoman be as accomplished a book-keeper as her French sister? How seldom in Paris do we see men acting as cashiers or book-keepers in any large business. There, women are allowed to be far more efficient, more safe, and more trustworthy. Hundreds of Parisian women earn liberal salaries as accountants. Why should we not do the same? Men are required for other labours. Every day they are called on to fulfil more important duties to the state and to themselves. Why should not women fit themselves for such occupations as are not incompatible with their sex and their abilities? It seems to me a libel on both sexes when men are handling ribbons and gauzes, earning women's wages, and doing women's work, while women cannot find employment at all.

It is a state of things that must terminate if it is not to result in misery to thousands. At this moment, when tens of thousands of our strongest are engaged in war, when like numbers

are departing for the colonies, when labour of every sort is becoming too much for the number of hands to perform it, it is incumbent on every young girl who does not possess a fortune to find some channel for the exercise of the faculties with which she is endowed; and, whether in her own family or in that of a stranger, to have some fixed pursuit in life which shall render that life itself a blessing to her and to all with whom she is connected.

And let no Englishwoman in selecting her occupation forget that the pride and boast of her country is its COMMERCE. That all the greatest institutions of our land, its schools, its hospitals, its libraries, its wealth at home, and the civilisation it has diffused abroad, it owes to its merchants and its trade. In remembering all this, she will cease to think it a degradation to be termed a tradeswoman.

CHAP. XIV.

HINTS TO GOVERNESSES.—HOW TO OBTAIN A SITUATION.

"A chiel's amang ye, takin' notes,
An' faith he'll prent 'em."

HAVING decided that the career of a governess is one for which you are qualified as well by the control you possess over your temper, the steadiness of your principles, and the cultivation of your mind, as by your scholastic acquirements and vigorous health, the first step towards entering your career is, to "obtain a situation." Perhaps this is so obvious you may think the remark very unnecessary; however, as my book is intended as a *guide* to the reader, and on this subject, even more than any other, I speak from actual experience, and from a knowledge of the difficulty of procuring a suitable situation, I propose to notice the various methods by which engagements are usually obtained.

In the first place, most of you have friends, who may be in a position to interest themselves among their connexions, to obtain for you a situation. Some who have not a large acquaintance, or whose friends may not have the power to aid them, advertise through the medium of the papers. Others, again, seeing advertisements of "Governess Institution and Governess Agency," in the "Times" and other papers, apply to one or more of the parties so advertising. It is my wish to give a candid opinion of the advantages and disadvantages of these different plans.

The first commends itself especially so far as that you have none of the trouble and expense of advertising, and you are also probably met with a feeling somewhat more friendly than you could expect from entire strangers. A lady who is already in some degree acquainted with yourself and family through mutual friends may feel from the beginning an interest in your welfare, and be disposed to treat you with more indulgence than she would a person of whose antecedents she is in ignorance. So far it is well.

It is the golden side of the shield; but, as the Italians say, "Ogni medaglio ha il suo reverso." Supposing that you do not entirely suit your employer, or do not feel happy in your engagement, the difficulty of leaving it with a kindly feeling on both sides is enhanced a hundred-fold by the circumstance of your having mutual acquaintances. The lady who has introduced you to each other will naturally be annoyed at finding that her exertions have been in vain; and whichever side she believes to be right, the other party will think her unjust; none of the three, perhaps, remembering that there are usually faults on both sides, and that, indeed, people may not be suited to live with each other, and yet neither party be extraordinarily deficient in sense or temper. Thus old friendships may be destroyed which, had no party-feeling arisen, would have lasted as long as life itself. This is the chief but not the only inconvenience which is apt to arise from seeking a situation through the recommendation of friends. Besides this, there is the frequent delay in hearing of an opening, the offence some patronising

friends are inclined to feel if you do not accept any engagement they may offer you, however unsuited to your wishes, attainments, and character. As a general rule, therefore, I should never advise a reliance on this mode of obtaining a situation.

The second is by an advertisement in the papers; and, now that the duty is taken off, this plan is very much less expensive than it used to be. Still it is very uncertain, and involves considerable delay, as, after putting in one advertisement you must wait a few days to see what replies you receive before you go to the expense of another. Several of your answers, too, may be to appoint interviews at different places at nearly the same time, and then omnibuses, cabs, and postage cost a great deal at a time when you can perhaps very ill afford it. Besides this, the disclosures of the last few years have shown that it is quite as necessary for you to ascertain the character of those who may wish to engage you, as for them to be acquainted with yours. It is certainly never advisable for a young lady to go to a strange house, unless it is the resi-

dence of some well known family, without having inquired the position and character of its inmates. If she has no father or brother to do this for her, she may safely ask of any respectable tradesman in the neighbourhood if such and such a family is known to them, if it is a good one, if the governess and servants remain with them for any length of time? In doing so, state that you are seeking a situation there, which will not only prevent you from being considered impertinently curious, but will also induce respectable persons to give you more accurate information than they would otherwise be inclined to afford a stranger.

Do not, if you can possibly avoid it, engage with any one who has frequent changes in the household. "Meddle not with those that are given to change," is an apostolic maxim which in this, as in all the other affairs of life, you will be entirely safe in following.

With regard to the papers in which it is desirable to advertise, your choice must depend on the sort of family you wish to enter. The "Morning Post" and "Court Journal" are

papers which address themselves exclusively to the aristocracy, and if your own station in life, your acquirements and your manners justify you in seeking a situation in a nobleman's family, they are unquestionably the best mediums. If it be an object with you to enter the family of a clergyman, the "Record" is the most suitable; and if a dissenter's, the "Wesleyan Times;" whilst all classes seek and find what they want in the "Times." With regard to this last, we must not forget that in the multitude of advertisements one (which may happen to be our own one) is apt to be overlooked. There are days, too, which are better than other days for advertising. Among those who spend annually hundreds or thousands in advertisements, Saturdays and Mondays are held to be best. It is always optional with you to name the day on which you wish your advertisement to appear.

In drawing up an advertisement make your statement in all respects as plain and truthful as possible; let it also be to the purpose, and avoid anything which will give the reader a handle for a jest. I am addressing only young persons;

but it may serve to illustrate my meaning if I remark the absurdity of a governess beginning her advertisement thus:—"A young lady of thirty-five wishes for a situation," &c. &c.

Always write an advertisement with the greatest care; say nothing superfluous, and omit nothing that is to the purpose. Dispense with adjectives and expletives of all sorts. State your age, your family (if professional), your expected salary, and leave as little as may be to the imagination. You will be far more likely to receive replies, and your interviews will not be shackled by queries that often embarrass both parties. Finally, keep the ticket you receive from the newspaper office until your advertisement has appeared; because they are occasionally lost, and you cannot recover the money or obtain redress without producing this ticket. Besides this, it may be useful to know that if any errors of magnitude occur in the advertisement which were not in your copy of it, the proprietors of the paper are bound to re-insert it free of charge. They may substitute figures for words (as in the case of giving an age), but

they may not alter one word. This is the reason we frequently see such ill-worded and ungrammatical advertisements. The printers dare not change a word of the advertiser's "*copy*," however great its absurdities, as they might be compelled to re-insert it free. Any words you may wish to be printed in capitals you will run two lines under in your copy, and the printer will generally attend to it.

But advertising is at best a vexatious and expensive mode of seeking a situation. You may receive fifty answers, and not one may result in an engagement, although, of course, you may have but one, and that one may suit you. In my opinion, by far the best way is to apply to a governess agent. Take care, however, what you do and where you go, for there are agents and agents. As the Persians said of their poets,

> "Two sorts of '*agents*' to earth are given,
> To guide through this dreary fog!
> The good are like angels from heaven,
> But the bad are worse than a dog!"

The system of governess agency is professedly this:—A lady whose own acquirements enable

her to judge of the capabilities of candidates for engagements, whose connexions are large, and whose tact and knowledge of the world are considerable, makes known to the world that she acts as medium between employers and employed. Ladies requiring governesses go to her office, and state the particulars of the situation they wish to have filled, what accomplishments are indispensable, what age, character, and position they wish the candidate to possess, and what salary they give. These particulars are all duly entered in a book by the agent. On the other hand, the governess gives a list of her acquirements, and the art, science, or language in which she is *forte* (as the French say), her age, the salary she expects, every particular, in short, which will save the agent and herself the trouble of negotiating with parties with whom there is no chance of an engagement being effected. When some one of the clients of the agent has applied for a governess whose acquirements seem to be those of one of the applicants, the address is forwarded to her, generally with a note of introduction, naming the hour at which

it is advisable for her to call, and if the references suit, the engagement is probably effected, the agent having also written to the lady to appoint the time for the interview.

It will be obvious that, if an agent has a good connexion among all classes, this mode of obtaining a situation has advantages over all others. You are at once put in communication with some one who requires the services of such a person as you describe yourself to be, and a vast deal of trouble is spared to both parties.

The remuneration of a governess agent usually consists of a registration fee of five shillings, without which they do not place your name on their books, and five per cent. on the first year's salary. If a foreign engagement is entered into, ten per cent. is required, as it is considered much more lucrative than one in England. It is usual also to have a few postage stamps to pay for letters; and this is just enough: for while a mere nothing to an individual, it is an enormous item in the expenditure of a person who has to correspond with hundreds or thousands of persons in a year. It is

usually a part of the arrangement, that if a situation is not provided within a given time, half the registration fee shall go towards an advertisement.

The only part of this arrangement to which I object, is the registration fee, which opens the way for many and disgraceful abuses. Of these I shall speak hereafter. In the meantime, it is only fair to remark that I believe governesses have brought the regulation upon themselves, by their want of honesty in paying the percentage stipulated. Many, to my knowledge, having obtained a good situation through the medium of an agent, have never troubled themselves about the fee at all; and this registration fee is a sort of security for and guarantee of their integrity. Thus it happens that the misconduct of any one member of a community is sure to injure the whole body.

These terms may appear high, and you may perhaps say it would be cheaper to advertise even several times; but, in the first place, advertising causes great delay,—in the second place, you are far more likely to remain in a

situation to which you are introduced by a conscientious agent; for she is certain to know something of the persons to whom she sends you, as well as of yourself, and her keen insight into character, matured by daily experience, will enable her to know what will suit you both. If a lady has notoriously the character of treating her governesses ill, or if she has behaved unkindly to any lady known to and placed there by the agent, she will find it as impossible to obtain a governess from that source again as you would yourself to get a situation. Hence, very frequently, the people who advertise for governesses are those who cannot get them in any other way, and who are not desirable employers. This is one reason why you ought to be very cautious of answering advertisements—although this rule, like all others, has its exceptions.

So far, then, it is decidedly advantageous to apply to an agent; but, as I have said before, there are agents of all sorts. To be of any use in obtaining you a situation an agent must have applications for governesses; she must have an extensive connexion, in order to meet the requirements of all who apply; and she should be

a person of great acquirements and deep insight into character, with thorough business habits.

Now, if you see an advertisement for a governess or a companion, "Apply to Mrs. So-and-so's Governess Institution," you may save yourself the trouble of becoming a candidate by using the most ordinary amount of common sense. On reading the advertisement you will seldom perceive that anything very remarkable in the way of acquirements and accomplishments is mentioned. Ask yourself, then, how it happens that a governess agent has not upon her books a single young lady fit to take this very desirable situation? Is it at all likely that, if she has no one seeking a situation, she has any patronesses wanting governesses? It is self-evident that she has no connexions, one way or another. Should you, however, have any doubts on the subject satisfy them by all means, if you can spare the time. Call at the appointed hour. A dirty servant girl will probably show you into an untidy half-furnished room, where *the agent* sits. Round it are seated, in attitudes of anxious expectation, a number of young ladies, candidates for the same situation. Each one, in

turn, approaches the arbiter of fate, and something like the following conversation occurs:—

"You have come, I suppose, in consequence of my advertisement?"

"Yes. I trust I am not too late."

"I hope not, indeed. May I ask what are your acquirements?"

[The candidate enumerates them.]

"The lady is a very particular person indeed. She is in the country at present." [N. B.—The lady always is in the country.] "The duties are very light, and then you will be treated entirely as one of the family. You seem to possess all the qualifications she has stipulated for. I shall have great pleasure in recommending you. Of course you know I require a registration fee."

[Very likely the candidate demurs to this.]

"Of course, with my connexion, you would be immediately placed in some other situation, equally desirable, should you not succeed in obtaining this one."

If you have more money than sense, you will very likely pay the fee; but do not let your dreams that night be disturbed by any visions of a situation; for although the agent's last

words to you contain an assurance that you shall hear from her without fail in a day or two, you may be perfectly certain on the subject; in all probability you will hear from her no more. Nay, I never knew yet an instance in which any one of the applicants did. It would perhaps be rash to assert that the "situation" never existed at all—that it was a mere bait to lure the money from the pockets of a number of anxious girls, all ignorant of the crafts of the world, and the snares to which they are exposed in London. Nevertheless such is my opinion, and so well grounded is it that "fire would not burn it out of me! I would die in it at the stake."

As a proof of the gullibility of the public, and the success of such an advertisement, I may mention one instance in which, to my knowledge, upwards of two hundred registration fees were the harvest reaped from this small investment of five shillings in the "Times." It is hard to say whether the audacity of the one party or the credulity of the other is to be most admired.

Another way in which governess agents occasionally try to get up a business is by poring over the "Times" every morning, and taking

the addresses of all those who advertise for governesses. Then, either their circulars are sent to the parties, or, more frequently, one or more of the poor girls who have paid the registration fee are sent to the lady as if she was one of the agent's *clientèle*, and had applied to her for a suitable governess. Of the annoyance that results to the applicant from this proceeding I need say nothing; the disagreeables that are likely to result from the misconception are sufficiently obvious. Nor need I caution you not to take up your residence under the roof of one of these agents, though some do (in consideration for the poor girls who have no friends in London!) receive boarders. It is so evidently their interest to keep you in their house as long as you have a farthing in your pocket, that I will only just hint at the folly of it. Nor is it desirable to go to an agent at whose residence lessons in various branches of knowledge are advertised to be given. You may pay your money, but you certainly will not take your choice of any situations at all. In fact, after paying the fee, you will never hear from her again.

I do not see why governess agents should not

give references to those who apply to them only as strangers. It would do away with all doubt and distrust, if before registering you had a reference to some other lady or ladies for whom engagements had been procured by the same person.

After warning you of dangers to which you may be exposed in your negotiations with governess agents, it is but completing my task to mention some parties to whom you may, with all security, apply. M. de Porquet, of Tavistock-street, Covent-garden, bears an excellent character as an agent; he has a large and influential connexion, and he stands alone in the one particular of not requiring a registration fee. Mrs. Waghorn (late Mesdames Hinton and Waghorn) bears an equally high character. She is herself highly accomplished, and capable of judging whether your accent in foreign languages is pure, your touch on the piano good, and so on. Of her sister's kindness I speak from experience. Mrs. Smith, of Alfred-place, Bedford-square, is another unexceptionable person. I may add that her *clientèle* is almost exclusively among the aristocracy, whilst the other two persons I have named have a more general class of correspondents.

In your dealings with any one of these parties, let me urge you, for your own sake, not less than for theirs, to be perfectly candid. It is a weakness to underrate your abilities and acquirements, but to overrate them can only involve you in trouble and annoyance. If, for instance, you say you can teach German or Italian when you know little more than the rudiments of the languages, and the agent, on the faith of your representation, introduces you to a situation where your pupils have already made some progress in it, what can you expect but to be dismissed at the end of the quarter, whilst your employer, indignant at falsehood, will very probably not only hesitate to recommend you, but will also withdraw her patronage from the agent who has been the innocent means of placing you there? You are thus injuring others as well as yourself, as people generally do when they deviate, however slightly, from the path of rectitude. Whilst acting with precision and truth yourself, take care that no mistake arises with the agent. If she gives you an introduction to a family, learn from her whether she is acquainted with their character; if they really

require the sort of governess you are; if they will give the salary you demand, &c. I have known a poor girl lose an entire day and a considerable sum of money in waiting on a lady who required only a morning governess, whilst the candidate had expressly stated that she could not take any but a resident engagement. The same agent had sent upwards of a dozen young ladies on the same fruitless errand, to the great annoyance of both parties. But what did she care? She had pocketed the registration fees, and wanted nothing more.

I have said nothing about the free registry at the Governesses' Benevolent Institution, for, though I believe it to be, in many respects, an excellent thing, still it is extremely inconvenient to many governesses to be obliged to go day after day to examine the books and see what ladies are requiring governesses, with the particulars. Doubtless there are difficulties in the way of any other arrangement, but, as this branch of the institution is at present constituted, it has drawbacks which render it unpopular; indeed, the Society altogether has too much the appearance of a charity to be very

much liked or approved by those who are able to earn their own living, and only anxious for an opportunity to do so. They need justice, and get only generosity, a substitute that is by no means an equivalent. In speaking of this institution, however, I am uttering rather the sentiments of others than my own, as I never, personally, had anything to do with it. Nothing can be more benevolent, or more admirable in intention, than its whole arrangement; and of the efforts to provide for the old age of those who have not had the power to lay up anything for themselves it is impossible to speak in terms of too great praise and admiration. Being of human origin, however, we cannot expect it to be without drawback; but perhaps a regulation which so greatly impedes its usefulness may yet receive further consideration; and I am sure that hundreds of governesses would be glad to pay a trifle to secure the addresses being sent to them.

All honour, however, to those who have so earnestly and faithfully exerted themselves to ameliorate the condition of the governess.

CHAP. XV.

GOVERNESSES.—HOW TO KEEP A SITUATION.

"Well begun is half done."—OLD PROVERB.

"Bear and forbear."—ANOTHER.

IN making an engagement with a family, it is, of course, of the utmost importance to you to know what are the domestic regulations of the circle you are about to enter, and what are also the views of the parents in the education of their children. In conversation with the lady, previous to any final arrangements, you can respectfully inquire what the usual routine of life may be: whether you are expected to join the parents at meals, and in the evening, or if you are to be entirely with the children: whether, also, you will have the comfort of a separate bed-room, in which you can enjoy the blessed feeling of freedom and solitude, which is, to a governess, perhaps one of the greatest luxuries of life.

With regard to invariably joining the family circle in the evening, it is a stipulation that I

should never deem it advisable to make. The evening is probably the only time which you can command for your own improvement; and if you neglect to increase your acquirements, you cannot expect to obtain a higher standing in your profession. Besides this, if the master of the house happen to be occupied during the day, and only at home in the evening, the constant presence of a third person cannot fail to be an annoyance. Is there anything more painful than to feel ourselves thus *de trop?* It is a much better plan, and one which adds greatly to the comfort of the families in which it is adopted, for the governess to be invited to make one of the circle when her presence is desired, and, when so invited, to be treated as any other guest would be. But, in general, her evenings should be devoted to her own improvement, or to the relaxation of her mind by the perusal of a pleasant book.

Another thing, which you are quite justified in mentioning, is your hope that, should the lady see any part of your system or manner of which she disapproves, she would name it to you alone, and not in the presence of your

pupils. This is, indeed, the interest of all parties—for few mothers wish to change continually the instructresses of their children—and it is very painful to a teacher to be blamed, directly or indirectly, in the presence of her young charge; for children are so keen-sighted that they are ready enough to detect any symptom of want of union between two who should, as far as they are concerned, be *one;* and if anything is said before them implying displeasure, farewell at once to their respect for the governess, and to her power of commanding their obedience.

None but a very ill-judging parent indeed would either contradict the orders given by the governess, or fail to uphold her authority. But should you be unfortunate enough to meet with such a mother, the sooner you resign your situation the better. By remaining in it, you will have your feelings exasperated and your health and temper injured, whilst your services can be of no sort of use to your pupils. By going at once, you may retain and leave some kindly feelings; by staying, you will only ultimately be compelled to part with bitterness.

But, on the other hand, nothing can excuse you for lessening the children's reverence for their mother, or disregarding her wishes and commands, even should you not quite agree with her views. No effort of imagination can enable you to picture to yourself the intense love of a mother for her children until you yourself become a parent. However much she may herself blame her children, it must always be painful to her feelings to hear others find fault with them; and, therefore, whilst endeavouring to correct their errors, avoid dwelling on them with anything like bitterness or severity to the parents.

Another stipulation you ought to make is for certain fixed holidays, in which you can enjoy the society of your own family and relax from the exertion necessary in your profession. For your own sake, and not less for that of your charges, this ought always to be stipulated for. Confined, for the most part, to the society of children during entire months, coming little or not at all in contact with minds superior to your own, perhaps seeing nothing of the current literature of the day, your perceptions become

dulled, and your mind stagnates to a degree you can hardly yourself estimate. Without obtaining at times a complete change, you will rapidly degenerate into a mere teaching machine, instead of a fit and efficient educator; your health, too, will be impaired, and your whole system become relaxed. I can never impress too strongly upon your mind that your health and intellect form your only capital, and that to do or submit to anything which will injure them is almost deliberate suicide.

It will be desirable, in the outset, to have your duties as clearly defined as possible. Having undertaken them, let them be executed with the most rigorous fidelity; but it is unwise, and often injurious to you, to interfere in matters which are not in "the bond." A nursery governess has, as a matter of course, the charge of the wardrobes of her pupils; but what business has a young lady, whose entire day is taken up with teaching languages, music, drawing, dancing, and English in all its branches, to occupy her evenings with mending and making her pupils' clothes? It lessens their respect for her, prevents her from improving herself,

and lowers her in the estimation of the family. Do not begin to undertake such duties, which belong to the nursery-maid, not the governess. Let no feeling of lassitude or weariness induce you to relax during the appointed hours of study; let no absence of your employer be an excuse to your own conscience for your altering, in the slightest degree, the regulations she has imposed. Remember, as one to whose example others should look up with respect, as one who has undertaken the most important duties a human being can engage in, you are especially bound to act, "not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart serving the Lord." How much will this consideration tend to smooth the difficulties in your path! From how many annoyances will you be preserved, if you maintain this singleness of heart!

TRUTH is so beautiful, and so inestimable a quality, we can hardly sufficiently appreciate the character and services of the person who resolutely inculcates it on the minds of our children. But it is not sufficient to say to children, "You must tell the truth always," nor to punish them for its violation, if they see

you act the shadow of a lie. If those keen critics observe that you do not act precisely the same when their mamma is present and when she is absent—if they detect you in the shadow of a falsehood—of what use will it be to command them to speak the truth? Even if you are upright yourself, you may, by a little want of judgment, drive your pupils into deception. Falsehood is the vice of a slave, and many a timid child is led into it by dread of punishment for trivial offences. Nothing should induce either a parent or a governess to punish any *accident*, whatever the loss or inconvenience to herself. By doing so, you destroy the distinction in the child's mind between an act of sin and a piece of heedlessness, and you tempt her to tell you a story to conceal her fault. Imagine a warm-hearted but careless child, eager perhaps to bring you the inkstand you require, rushes for it, and, in her haste, upsets it over the carpet and her own dress. Sufficiently frightened already, she hears you come into the room. It greatly depends on you whether the exact truth, or an excuse (which is nearly a falsehood), comes from her lips. You begin in a passion—

"You naughty little girl! How dare you be so careless? See how you have spoiled the carpet. Go to bed directly, and don't let me see you again to-day." Do you think that it will require no courage in a child frankly to avow her fault after this? But suppose your grave face shows your regret, and you say, "Oh my dear little girl, what a pity you have been so careless! Are you not very sorry? Mamma will be so grieved to find you are not more thoughtful." The child's quivering lips and tearful eyes show that she is indeed sorry; but if your angry remarks show that you are punishing her in a spirit of revenge for the mischief she has done, and not with a desire to correct her faults, you lose your influence over her, and confuse all sense of right and wrong in her mind; for feeling as she does, that her *intention* was to be good, she cannot see that her fault was so great as your punishment implies.

It requires great discrimination and great gentleness to be a good governess. No one should undertake that task who has not a decided liking for young people, who cannot discern between

obstinacy and dullness—between the ebullitions of temper and the peevishness of illness. Many a girl is punished for naughtiness when she is simply unwell, though she cannot perhaps tell you what is the matter with her. If you see a child irritable and peevish without any apparent cause, you may safely suspect that she requires a dose of medicine; for it is not natural for children to be cross, if they are reasonably treated and usefully employed. Avoid provoking a spirit of contradiction. It is much easier to say, "You *shall* do so and so," than to compel your pupil to do it; and if once you give an order and suffer it to be disobeyed, you open the door for endless contentions and disturbances. Be very careful, then, not to command anything if you cannot enforce obedience. Let your orders be few, but let them be implicitly obeyed. Show yourself ready to be pleased with the effort to do right, even if the performance is not quite perfect. Study to employ the mind, even in illness; and I need hardly say to a young and gentle woman, "Be gentle and tender to the suffering and the feeble." Show that you feel for and with the ailing; that the

faults of the naughty grieve you, and that it is a pleasure to you to give them happiness; and you cannot fail to acquire an influence over your charge. Remember that threats are the worst possible arguments, and bribes are little better. Let the approbation of their parents and their own conscience be their reward. To use sweetmeats or dainties as a reward or punishment is certain to make a child greedy; to give presents for the simple performance of duty is to buy that which it is incumbent on the child to give freely, willingly, and as a matter of course.

It has often struck me as desirable that a governess should have more latitude in her actions than she has—that it should be in her power to confer more pleasures than she does. If, for instance, she could sometimes take them for a day's holiday to see any sight, on her own responsibility, the pleasure coming direct from her would increase her influence over her pupils, and would do them a great deal of good in every way. One sensible mother I knew, who acceded to this plan; and probably my pupils will remember for years our pleasant excursions to the sights of London in winter, and over the

country in summer—the visit to an East Indiaman, to St. Paul's, the India House, and other places, and their dinner afterwards in my own apartments. How cordially we met the next morning after such a day! How much it fostered kindly feelings on all sides!

To sum up the management of children in a few words: "Lead rather than drive;" cultivate their *hearts* as well as their heads, and seek to give them good principles as the mainspring of gentle manners and upright actions. However young a child may be, it is not too young to live for others and to seek their happiness. Finally, as you have to do with beings yet more frail, feeble, and fallible than yourself,

> "Be to their faults a little blind,
> And to their virtues very kind,
> You'll clasp a padlock on their mind."

One of the greatest annoyances a governess has to encounter is in the conduct of the servants of the family. If she talks to them, they become too familiar; if she does not speak, they neglect her comforts, and annoy her in many ways, under the impression she "gives herself airs." Some also, particularly the

nurses, are apt to make common cause with the children if it is necessary to punish them, and to encourage them in disobedience. Much of this depends on the conduct of the lady of the house herself. If she sets an example of neglect, the servants are sure to follow it; but if, on the other hand, she is a gentlewoman in feeling, she will insist on proper attention being paid to the governess; and a sensible mother will certainly not allow the servants to interfere with her proper discipline. On the other hand, young ladies in all positions are but too apt to forget that servants have the same nature as themselves; they speak abruptly, often dictatorially; they give needless trouble, and do not apologise for it; they receive kindness without thanks. All this is unchristian and unwomanly, even to our own hired assistants; but it is extremely impolitic, also, where both parties are working equally for their bread under the roof of another, however different their stations. I cannot but think that in most cases the young governess has herself to blame for this drawback to her comfort. Without gossipping, or being familiar, she may show them she appreciates

attention, and is considerate for them; in sickness, especially, she may often show her womanly feeling and pity. If she meets with this addition to her discomforts, and cannot remedy it, let her bear it with patience until better times.

With the family and visitors, a young governess will do wisely to be very guarded, and to avoid any appearance of obtrusiveness; although there is no need to act the part of a sycophant. By keeping in her place, she will command respect; by going out of it, she invites and exposes herself to neglect. Be not ready to take affronts, or to fancy unkindnesses are meant when they are not. Never speak or write to your own family and friends of the private affairs of your employers. Do not judge hastily of the situation you are in: you will seldom find it quite so bad or so good as at first entrance it may appear; and, by committing yourself to an opinion, you lay yourself open to the charge of inconsistency or want of judgment. Indeed, it is unwise and selfish to trouble those who love you with more complaints than you can avoid. If it is necessary

to remain in a situation, it can do no good to dwell on its disagreeables. If you cannot endure them, you can leave.

Avoid boasting of your family or former position, if you have formerly occupied a higher station. It is of little moment to your employers what your father or grandfather was, provided you have had the education of a gentlewoman. What you can *do*, and what you yourself are, are the great considerations. Show that you respect your position, and that you think your occupation an honourable one, by building your claims to consideration on it. Dignify your office, and you will be honoured in it.

Try to get the habit of looking at the bright side of things. This is more in our own power than many imagine. Remember the injunction, to "be wise as serpents" as well as "harmless as doves." In the words of the great poet of nature and humanity,

> "To thine own self be true,
> And it will follow, as the day the night,
> Thou canst not then be false to any man."

CHAP. XVI.

THE ART OF TEACHING.

"It requires all our learning to make things simple."

After having gone through the usual routine of study at school, and acquired a knowledge of French, Italian, German, the piano, &c.—not to mention geography, arithmetic, and such other indispensable matters—a young lady fancies that she has nothing further to do to fit herself for a situation as governess. It never seems to strike her that, to have learnt and to be able to teach are two different things, and not by any means always found combined.

Satisfied with having acquired a language or a science, she never asks herself, "Can I impart this knowledge to a child? How shall I bring this subject to the level of her capacity? How shall I explain that rule so that she may thoroughly comprehend it?" Take the simplest definition of a part of speech in Murray's Grammar, and try to explain it to your little sister,

and you will soon discover both how difficult an art the art of teaching is, and how deplorably it is neglected.

A governess who wishes to simplify the acquisition of knowledge to her pupils is therefore too often driven, from want of a proper understanding of the nature of her duty, to adopt one of the many quack systems of the day, which, substituting rules for reasons, and practice for principle, gives its votaries the name of having learnt a great deal; whilst heart, hand, and mind are alike guiltless of anything that the utmost stretch of courtesy could term KNOWLEDGE. These "royal roads," these "eight-easy-lesson" paths, lead to ignorance and self-conceit only, instead of to knowledge. They may serve to disguise the teacher's ignorance, and to impose upon a mother who is equally ignorant; but every one who is competent to teach, and understands the art of making knowledge simple, looks with contempt upon these short cuts to the temple of learning.

Are there, then, no improvements in the science of teaching? Certainly there are. There are many works now, on almost every subject,

which will serve to imbue a teacher's mind with the leading principles of that which she is desirous of teaching. But these works are not intended for beginners. They are for the study of the governess, to enable her fully to master the subject herself; but it is from the stores in her own mind that she should teach her pupils.

The first thing I would impress upon your mind is, that the object of teaching is not to enable your pupils to say "I have learnt," but to let them feel that they thoroughly *know*. What, for instance, is the use of their having gone through all the four first rules of arithmetic, if they cannot detect the errors in a small account? Your pupil may be able to do a sum in the Rule of Three, on the slate, with tolerable facility, without knowing much of the science of numbers; but if she can rapidly go over her mamma's weekly accounts, or put her study to any other practical purpose, without thought or hesitation, you may be congratulated on having taught her a very essential branch of knowledge—she is learning arithmetic to some purpose. Before, however, you can so teach it,

must have mastered it thoroughly yourself

—not its details, but its principles. You must carefully consider the subject in all its bearings, until you can impart—not the contents of Guy or Walkingame but the principles of calculation.

Grammar should be treated in the same way. Study all the authorities you can find, from "Little Mary's Grammar" to Murray's large edition. The former is an admirably *suggestive* book, and you may use it with pupils with great safety. In my opinion, little children are, however, much more capable of learning from oral instruction than from any book whatever. If you tell a little girl that "a noun is anything she can see, touch, or think of," and you allow her to point out all the nouns in the room, she will understand it far better than if she learnt the words by rote, however perfectly. As she advances farther she may be permitted to correct any grammatical inaccuracies that you may perceive in any works she is reading; and if you have occasion to point out blunders of her own, always show her *why* the words she uttered were wrong. In arithmetic, the multiplication tables form generally the first lesson, and it

seems to be quite forgotten that addition and subtraction come before multiplication. "Begin with the beginning," practise your pupil in addition first—then combine it with subtraction, beginning with the lowest numbers. Thus, make them add 2 to 1. Then two more, two more, and so on up to 50 or 100. Then they may add 2 to 2. Afterwards 2 to 3. Then 3 to 1—3 to 2—3 to 3. After exercising them thoroughly in this way, up to 9 or even 12, you may allow them, after writing a certain number, to deduct or subtract any number backwards until they can do so no longer. Let them begin with 101, and take away 2—99, 97, 95, 93, &c., &c. A perfect system may readily be formed.

Spelling is another very important part of a child's education. Besides the spelling-lesson, as soon as she can write at all, she should begin dictation, and every word erroneously spelt should be corrected *by herself*, and then entered into a book to be kept for that purpose. The next day, the same lesson in dictation should be repeated, and continued until that piece is written without an error.

In fact, this system should be carried out in every branch of study. Let one lesson be thoroughly mastered before you proceed to another; and, although your pupil may appear at first to make little progress, the result in the course of a year will be most satisfactory. In teaching children especially, your motto should be "line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little." Make haste *slowly*. The errors a child has herself corrected she will probably remember, especially if you point out carefully and clearly the rules she has violated; but if *you* correct her blunders, and she rubs the exercise off her slate, and thinks no more about it, what improvement can you expect?

Music is another thing which requires unwearying patience on the part of both teacher and pupil. To any child not possessing a decided talent for it the rudiments are so dry and wearisome, that it seems hard to deny a child permission to learn a tune, instead of keeping her conscientiously to the exercises. And yet, remember, there is no other way of acquiring facility of execution than by steadily practising these exercises. Many English

teachers neglect sufficiently to exercise the left hand, which in Germany is most rigorously cultivated; hence, there is a poverty in the performance of a young English player which we do not find in that of her foreign contemporary. This hand, being much the weakest, requires double exercise; and those lessons which will give it practice should receive great attention. Reading at sight should be daily practised, and time should be carefully counted, aloud, by the pupil, whilst the governess sits by her side and beats time with her hand. Even she, however, may involuntarily accelerate or retard the motion of her hand, unless she uses the utmost care. I was much indebted to an eminent teacher for the recommendation to let the hand point in the form of a cross if the piece required me to count four, or of a triangle if counting three, as it insured a regularity of movement not to be obtained in the ordinary way. Duets also are excellent practice for a pupil who is sufficiently advanced, as they gratify her parents and herself by containing an air, whilst they improve her time.

Drawing, as at present taught, is one of the

most useless accomplishments. It is emphatically a thing which it seems indispensable *to learn;* whilst, for any practical purpose, it is quite unnecessary to know it. A child advances from straight strokes to landscapes and figures; but ask her to draw you an oak or an elm, or to represent a few labourers in various parts of a hayfield, and you will soon see how little she knows of form, perspective, or any other useful part of the art.

Children are not sufficiently taught to observe. The eye requires education and training as much as the fingers. Your pupil should be led to examine, even from babyhood, the minutest parts of a picture, or of anything before it; and though some will display much greater aptitude than others in inquiring and investigating, the habit will be fostered in all.

Mr. Frank Howard's system of drawing, beginning with mere outlines and advancing very gradually to the highest stages of art, has always appeared to me an excellent one, as every lesson is practical, and a pupil learns to draw what she will, and not only that of which she has a copy.

Many teachers lay a great stress on learning poetry by rote. Some children will do this of their own accord; but where great difficulty is experienced in doing so, it seems to me better to inspire them with a liking for it, by reading to them such pieces as are suited to their capacity, than to make a toil of what should be a great treat.

Carriage and manners ought never to be neglected. A loud rough tone should be carefully and constantly corrected, for a low voice is, indeed, "an excellent thing in woman." No child should be allowed to neglect the courtesies of society to any member of its own family. Rude habits indulged in the domestic circle cannot be laid aside at will, and they lead to constant discomfort.

I do not profess to write for the experienced governess, but for the one who, just entering on her career, feels at a loss in what way most efficiently to fulfil her duties.

In conclusion, I can only say, Give them if possible a taste for books, by never associating them with punishment. Let no selfish considerations stand in the way of your pupils' im-

provement. Above all, remember "Example draws where precept fails." If your precepts and your practice do not agree, you will do but little good by all your lessons. The post of a governess is most honourable, as well as arduous, and none should occupy it without a higher motive than the mere earning of her bread. On her, next to the mother herself, does the future destiny of the child depend: this consideration should influence every action, and day by day she should act upon the injunction, "Whatsoever ye do, do it *heartily*, as to the Lord and not unto men, knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord."

CHAP. XVII.

TO MOTHERS.

"A mother's love! how sweet the name!
What is a mother's love?
The noblest, purest, tenderest flame
Enkindled from above,
To bless a heart of earthly mould,
As much of heaven as earth can hold,
Nor, through eternity grows cold,
This is a mother's love."—MONTGOMERY.

A Mother's love! Can any one doubt its being the purest, the warmest, the most ennobling affection in the world? How patiently a mother bears with all the pains and sorrows incidental to maternity—how she rejoices over her babe—how she watches its every movement with a yearning of love which has no equal amongst earthly affections! And if she is bereaved of the idol of her heart, what bitterness of grief does its loss occasion! She mourns as one refusing to be comforted. She grieves over the little helpless thing that scarce perhaps even knew her voice, with a grief that she could

hardly feel for the husband of her youth, or the mother who bare her. Ah! and the loss of an infant is a grief which no time destroys. All other sorrows are softened beneath the hand of the Great Comforter, but to the latest period of existence a mother will weep the death of her baby, and kiss the morsel of hair taken from its precious head, and look with ever-fresh anguish at the toys which once were held in the hand that years ago has mouldered in the dust.

"Can a mother forget her sucking child, that she may not have compassion on the fruit of her womb?" It would seem monstrous to suppose it possible; and yet, daily do we see instances of the mother forgetting, or ceasing to regard with love, the being to whom she has given life. All are not, therefore, such mothers as Montgomery describes in the exquisite poem I have quoted at the head of the chapter. So far from it, I am afraid that a false position is too frequently taken up by mothers at the outset of the education of their children. They seem to think that all the *duty* is on the part of the child, because they have given it existence! Is existence, then, of itself such a boon? What

rational being will answer, Yes? When I hear a mother upbraiding a child for not being sufficiently grateful for this blessing, I cannot help thinking of a child I once heard reply to such an appeal, "Well, I did not ask to be born." It was a girl not eight years old who made this answer; and doubtless hundreds of others, if they have not the nerve to speak, feel no less deeply the injustice of their parent's conduct.

For unjust it is. The duties of children and parents are reciprocal; but those of the parents begin the first, as they have incurred the responsibility. That great and keen observer, and daring denunciator of conventional errors, Charles Dickens, never took a bolder step than when he made a daughter address her mother with, "Have you ever been dutiful to me?" How many parents would be puzzled to answer the query! for, to judge by their conduct, we must conclude that they consider they have done sufficient in giving EXISTENCE to their children; that the debt for life is so great it can never be cancelled by any subsequent mismanagement or ill-treatment. Even the love of parents is too often selfish; their children

are a part of themselves, and as such are petted, and dressed, and taught. But the moment a child wishes to do anything contrary to the parent's will, or evinces a character not consonant with her notions, he or she is ungrateful, rebellious, and undutiful. Now this is not the part of a Christian parent, who looks upon the little being given to her as a sacred treasure, to be guarded, and guided, and tended with a fond devotion which will make her in return the object of devotion and veneration to her child. In everything such a mother (and happily they form the larger number) will seek the good of her child in preference to her own: its welfare will be studied, its future as well as present happiness cared for; its mind enlightened, with continual remembrance not only of its earthly prosperity but its future happiness.

Among the most important considerations to such a mother will be the education of her children; and if they are girls, she will probably be the principal in all arrangements for schools or governesses. It is in this important step I would offer them some counsel—the result of practical acquaintance with the subject. The

earliest teacher, naturally and inevitably, is the mother herself. Unless she is absolutely separated from her child, it *will* learn from her, months before she is aware perhaps that it is so learning or she teaching. This is not the place to discuss infant education, nor will my space permit me to do so; I must content myself then with remarking, that the first lesson instilled in a baby's mind must be implicit, unquestioning obedience. If this be not perfectly learnt in the first two years of life, it will hardly be acquired afterwards.

Let the mother, then, be at least the chief companion to her children; and believe it, that whatever good she may *impart*, she will *derive* much more from the association. For the pure soft light of a child's dear eyes, the innocent smile, the fond endearing ways, are so many links forged by Heaven to purify and elevate the mind of the mother. I am convinced that no mother, however miserable in other respects, can be quite wretched if she has a child to soothe her with its affection; nor can she fail to feel that the little treasure is in truth a guardian angel—a being for whose sake she must purify

her own heart, and watch, with more than ordinary care, over every look, and word, and action.

But the time will probably come when, from many circumstances, she is no longer herself able to continue the instruction of her child; and then comes the question which it is my hope to aid her to solve—what plan of education can I adopt? Shall I send my daughter to school, or have a governess at home? The former plan, although very generally pursued, has many, and, to my mind, insuperable objections in all ordinary cases. Doubtless there are many good schools; and I, whose only happy days were spent at school, should be the last to speak against school education. But then, Prospect House was a school, and not a school; there was all the search into individual character, all the adaptation of conduct to peculiar circumstances, all the kindly watchfulness, all the gentle admonition, never degrading, but always encouraging, that the tenderest parent could give: only there were four mothers instead of one. It was their beautiful maxim, that the heart that could not be won by kindness could be gained in no other way: and so they won

every heart. Hard indeed as the nether millstone must that character have been that could remain unsoftened by dear Miss E.'s gentle, tender, loving remonstrance; strangely cold the heart that would be unawakened by the indulgent gentleness of Miss M. What girl could leave the room without learning something from her lesson with Miss L.; or but would think herself privileged in being allowed to assist when Miss Maria, on hospitable thoughts intent, was busy in her preparation of delicate cakes and magnificent tarts, to celebrate some birthday? And then, to listen to her glorious voice, and brilliant execution on the piano, to be sharers in the gaiety of the evening, which would not have been gay, even with the aid of tarts and parkin, had one of those dear faces been missing. Happy, happy girls, were those whose privilege it was to be educated beneath their roof.

But they are gone! Three live only in the grateful memory of their pupils, and the fourth has ceased that active life which she has no longer her beloved companions to share. Long may she be spared to our love!

* * * * *

But enough of this. "We ne'er shall look upon their like again;" and failing it, unquestionably the best mode of training daughters is to have them under your own eye, in the care of an accomplished governess.

I hope yet to live to see the day when only those women who have really a gift for teaching will undertake so responsible an office. Much may be done by mothers themselves to bring about this desirable state of things.

The position of a governess is in itself a most responsible one. She is the mother's vicegerent, and the mother (in all reverence be it spoken) is the Almighty's. Only second, therefore, in importance to the mother herself, and sometimes even more important still, is this vicegerent, who has the training of the minds and hearts of her pupils, and upon whom, therefore, depends in a great measure whether those children shall be a blessing or a curse to their parents.

I will venture a few observations on the *essentials* in selecting a governess, and the requirements which should be principally considered.

The first thing to ascertain is, what sort of

instructress the rank, ages, &c., of the children demand; the second, what particular accomplishments the genius of the children render it most desirable their governess should possess; and lastly, what salary will be an adequate remuneration for the services we require.

These points are of essential importance; for it follows naturally that the instructress of ladies of sixteen or eighteen years of age should have sufficient advantage over them on that head to command their respect: and with regard to *accomplishments* it is evident that some regard should be had to her proficiency in those particular branches of study for which they display the greatest taste. This, however, should not be an object of paramount importance: it is much more requisite to consider how far she is competent to supply the place of a *mother*, than how she can fulfil the duties of a master. Moreover, if the children be young, it is certainly desirable that the governess should not be too old: there should be a certain amount of freshness and elasticity about a person who is much with very young people, which renders her more fit to endure the noise

and tiresome ways of little children. But *youth* presupposes not only inexperience, but a certain deficiency in acquirements also: and this, you think, involves the necessity of making a new selection as your children advance in years.

Now this step is fraught with mischief to every one concerned—to the pupils above all others. A much more sensible, and (taking *time* and its value into account) a much more economical one, would be to endeavour to retain the same governess during the whole course of your children's education, paying her a salary which should permit her to study at her leisure any language or science in which she might not be very proficient, under some good master.

Allowing that she thus continues to receive masters during a quarter of every year for seven years, and employs even a single hour daily during the remaining period, she must certainly be quite competent to *finish* the education of children with whose tempers and peculiarities she is so intimately acquainted. As, however, few families are so completely buried in the country as to be quite inacessible to masters, it would be much better to employ them as the

girls advance to womanhood, than to deprive them of their old instructress if unexceptionable in other respects.

But because I recommend you to choose in the first place a lady who may not be highly accomplished, do not for an instant suppose that I mean to advise you to employ an inferior or inefficient, far less an ignorant person for the youngest child in the schoolroom. No: it is as essential that the teacher of an infant should be well informed, as that she should be well-principled; but parents have yet to discover that *accomplishments* are not *information*, and that a young woman may play brilliantly, and draw superbly, and yet be entirely ignorant of everything she ought to know. A moment's thought must assure us that if a girl of eighteen be highly accomplished, she must have devoted herself to the ornamental parts of study at the expense of the *useful;* and these are the indispensables in the acquirements of a governess, because we cannot supply the deficiency by the aid of any master whatever.

The plan I have recommended, of encouraging the governess to continue her own studies

under some able master, and thus enabling her to remain in the same family for years, would, if generally adopted, improve the character of this class of teachers to a surprising degree. But this plan requires that governesses should be more liberally remunerated than we generally find them to be.

Forty pounds is certainly the smallest amount that ought to be offered to a young resident governess; and this should be increased annually ten pounds, until it reaches one hundred and twenty pounds. Whilst, however, parents will not sacrifice their slightest whim in order to remunerate the governesses of their children with equity, they must expect to be constantly annoyed by want of principle, ignorance, and indifference in those they employ. They cannot expect the principles, manners, and mind of a lady to be obtained for the wages of a servant.

And even when a liberal salary is given, and adequate return is afforded in the conscientious labours of a refined intellectual gentlewoman, a parent will still find it necessary to remember that she cannot in this world expect *perfection*. A governess has many sources of irritation, and

perhaps of grief, of which her employers know nothing; her employment, too, is one of paramount importance to society, but of incessant exertion and great weariness to herself. Neither the mind nor the body is always in tune, nor can the same amount of physical exertion always be endured. She may at times display irritation or weariness, perhaps appear deficient in energy or in industry. But these are conditions inseparable from her state, not as a governess, but as a human being. Similar or worse faults you are certain to find whilst women, not angels, undertake to teach children who are not quite seraphs. A little rest, a pleasant evening in pleasant society, a new book, perhaps a few days' visit home, will restore the balance of her mind, and enable her to resume her duties with pleasure and alacrity.

But whilst I would be thus lenient, even to indulgence, to the weaknesses of humanity, I would be unsparing to anything like vice. An attempt to make children deceive a parent, to induce them "not to tell" anything that occurs in the school-room, to act differently in my presence and in my absence—these are errors which it would be culpable to pardon.

It requires, however, judicious management on the part of a parent to watch over the progress of her children, ascertain their improvement, and discover any defects in their management, without allowing the children to know that she is displeased with "the governess." The moment a child begins to discover that those who instruct her are not perfectly agreed among themselves, then she takes advantage of her knowledge to treat her governess with impertinence.

Whatever fault, therefore, may be found, whatever errors reproved, *must* be done in the absence of the children. Not a word or look of the parents should ever sanction a child in thinking that she is pleasing them by displeasing the governess.

The terms I have named may perhaps be considered high, and some ladies may say they cannot afford them. Is it so? Or is it that you do not choose to sacrifice some personal gratification for the good of your child? Is this maternal love? Is this the pure spirit of self-sacrifice which we associate in idea with the sacred name of mother? What is it you are required to give up? You give six dinner

parties in the season. Confine yourself to five, and add what you have saved to the salary of your governess. It will be something worthy of her acceptance. Or do with one dress and bonnet less, if in more limited circumstances. Make any sacrifice rather than that of the welfare of your children.

Interest yourself, too, in the well-being of your governesses. Encourage them and aid them to insure their lives, to provide something for their old age, to make the most in every way of their salary. No philanthropic plan was ever organised, under the most distinguished patronage, that would work more universal good than this.

Another duty to all concerned is, to take yourself at times the care of your own children. Her Majesty—in this, as in all else, a pattern to mothers—is said to devote a certain period daily to the society of her children. Nurses and governesses are dismissed, and the royal parents and their children are alone together. Will no peculiarities of temper or character be developed? Will no erroneous notions be corrected? Will no virtues be strengthened, nor family bonds made yet more firm by this un-

trammelled intercourse? Benefit to every party concerned must be the result of this plan, which should be adopted by every parent in the realm.

Another mooted point is the bounds to the intercourse between the governess and the family. Speaking from experience, I never can think it advisable for the governess to be expected to spend every evening in the drawing-room. It is an intolerable tax on all parties—a loss of time to the governess, who should be amusing or improving herself; and very embarrassing to a husband and wife, who probably have their own affairs to discuss. But why should not the governess be invited, like any other visitor, and when in the drawing-room be treated as her education and responsible office demand? Surely the best solution of a difficulty felt by both parties would be found in this simple expedient.

Much could I say of the trials of a governess—of the wear and tear of brain, which results so frequently in insanity; of the many and peculiar trials of the profession; but I refrain. One caution only would I give, not to make a great profession of religion, whilst your deeds are at variance with it.

To conclude. In the relation of parents and governesses, as in every other in life, one, and but one rule of life is required. Let mothers do to the instructresses of their children as they would wish others to do to them in like circumstances; but let them not pique themselves on being good mothers, or deserving of the name of mothers at all, while they will not, for the sake of their offspring, forego one superfluous luxury, or subdue one unchristian temper.

Act then on that one single-minded principle of "doing as you would be done by." When this perfect maxim of human conduct becomes the principle of the actions of those who employ governesses, that class will become, by the force of natural circumstances, more competent to fulfil their duties. They will have inducements to make their whole profession honourable; whilst it now requires a mighty effort in certain individuals to maintain even the humble position assigned to it by public opinion.

I will conclude by reminding you that the Bible itself commands that exercise of *justice*, of the wisdom and policy of which I have been endeavouring to convince you.

L'ENVOI.

"*L'homme propose, mais Dieu dispose*" is a motto which perhaps every one of us might adopt as our own. Into how many paths are we led by the force of circumstances, which would be the last we should select were we absolutely free agents! And yet how often it happens that, tracing back step by step our career, we find that there is some obvious good, not only to ourselves but to others, in the state of affairs which we might otherwise be tempted to regard as unfortunate.

In truth, had we that profound faith in the good Providence of our heavenly Father which we all profess to have, we should be rather inclined to look round us, and see how we could turn each circumstance to the best advantage to ourselves and others, than repine at a lot which may and must have good in it, if we only knew how to recognise it.

Can any phenomenon in nature be more won-

derful than the way in which we are prepared, by the vicissitudes of life, to act a certain earnest and useful part towards our fellow-creatures? The only misfortune appears to be that too often we do not seek to know what our mission is until it is too late to accomplish it; but assuredly it is our wisdom as certainly as our happiness to ascertain in what career we are most likely to be useful, and to maintain our career, once so selected, with a constancy which only profound FAITH and earnest HOPE can inspire.

I almost fear to appear egotistical if I trespass on my reader's time by entering on an explanation of my own plans, and the means for their fulfilment; but it is not from their relation to myself, but because I have a thorough belief in their practicability, and a strong conviction that they are calculated to effect much good to my own sex that I venture to lay them before the public. In doing so, I must enter on details which could have no interest to the reader did they not bear directly on the destiny and welfare of very many besides the writer.

The daughter of an officer whose life fell a

sacrifice to his zeal in the service of his country —the granddaughter, niece, sister of men following the same honourable profession—it has been a matter of surprise and regret to some of my friends that I should have been engaged in commerce, or, to speak more plainly, become a shopkeeper. That I have done so is true; and so evidently is this the result of Destiny rather than choice, that I have felt, from the moment of embarking in it, that there was some higher and better object to be achieved, (could I but fathom it,) than the accumulation of pounds, shillings, and pence, that I have never ceased to weigh every passing event as a seaman would watch the current of the waves, to see whither they would carry him. I think I have now ascertained what this object is which I am destined to fulfil, and for which every former part of my life, as teacher and writer, has been preparing me. And thus it was that I became a shopkeeper.

I had spent some years in unremitting toil as a governess, varied only by the regular or casual employment of my pen on the press, when my kind friend and publisher, Mr. Darton, proposed

to me to write a book on needlework, an offer which I had but one scruple about accepting—the slight one, that I knew nothing whatever of the subject. However, study, and the remembrance of the early instructions of my dear mother, whose skill surpassed that of any woman I have ever seen, enabled me to write the work in question, though no one was so much amazed as myself to find it *a success*. From that time offers of engagements on that department of the various periodicals poured in, and as, perhaps, a necessary consequence, inquiries where this and that material could be had; and suggestions from all quarters that I would keep the materials for my designs. The little serial on needlework had transformed the author and teacher into—tell it not in Gath!—a shopkeeper!

I had had so little hand in the change that it fairly puzzled me. I am one of those who believe that every incident of life and every acquirement is destined for some wise purpose; and for long I could not understand why I had thus found myself in a position for which my previous habits and my acquirements in no way prepared me. Were the languages and litera-

ture in which I had delighted, the knowledge of young people, and the management of them, to be utterly useless accomplishments thrown aside for ever? I felt that it was not so; that there was some ulterior reason for all I had seen and suffered, and that I had only to wait and watch to discover it. I was not wrong. As I began to receive young people into my house, to instruct them in business, I found all my resources of service. In improving their minds and amusing their leisure hours, I observed I was developing an intelligence as well as a good feeling, valuable in the highest degree to myself, and equally also to their benefit; and often have I been congratulated on the ladylike manners and good sense of my young people, obviously so different to those in many establishments.

I began to understand for what I was living. I saw that it was in my power to open out a new career for girls who, not having abilities to fit them for governess-ships, might yet earn a comfortable livelihood in commerce if properly trained; and I resolved to devote my large handsome house in Albany Street to the purposes of a TRAINING INSTITUTION for young

ladies, who should afterwards enter business. For this my arrangements are now completed, and a very brief programme will suffice to show its nature.

The first consideration was the health of the pupils, inasmuch as, that destroyed, nothing can ever replace the blessing. Airy rooms, good and abundant food, and plenty of exercise, are the chief conditions of health to all young people; and to secure this, as far as possible, I resolved to allow them an hour in the middle or best part of the day, for exercise in the open air, besides other intervals. A knowledge of drawing and designing, and facility in the use of the pencil are so obviously necessary, I need not dilate on it; but I have been fortunate enough to secure the services and co-operation of a lady from the Government School of Design, to give them weekly lessons in this branch of art. As a privilege and an amusement for their leisure hours, a lady also attends twice a week in the evening to give them lessons in Music; and I shall myself be their instructress in French (a most essential acquirement in any Berlin House,) and in English composition,

letter writing, &c. The day will be occupied thus :—

8 to 9. Breakfast and Prayers.
9 to 12. Business.
12 to 2. Exercise and Dinner.
2 to 6. Business, with one hour reading aloud.
6 to 7. Tea.
7 to 9. Music, Painting, Drawing, French, and English.
9 to 9½. Free.
9½ to 10½. Supper, Prayers, Bed.

One Monday in the month is a whole holiday, an arrangement which enables those who have friends in town to remain with them. Another will be devoted to cutting out and making articles of apparel for the poor, at once a very useful lesson to the young ladies themselves, and a benefit to others. On another Monday I contemplate having a competent dressmaker to teach them to cut out and make their own dresses, and the afternoon will be devoted to learning how to make and mend their linen. The fourth they will work for bazaars, &c., in aid of charities.

I purpose also to intrust each alternately with the housekeeping for a week, so as to accustom her to the details of domestic economy.

The Sunday is spent at home, if they please: if not, they go to church, generally morning and evening; and suitable books and a quiet walk fill up the rest of the day.

So prepared, I trust my pupils will be enabled to command a higher salary in a house of business than any are at present paid. Certainly they will be infinitely more valuable to their employers, and I am very sure will be far happier than they could be as ill-paid third-rate governesses. Besides, if one establishment makes health and mental improvement an object, others will follow the example. Then the domestic employment will enable them to acquit themselves well in their more certain destiny as wives and mothers. In short, it is my aim, while preparing them to take a high position in business, not to unfit them to be ornaments to their own homes.

From those who wish to enter my establishment I shall require certificates that they have had the usual diseases of childhood, are in sound health, and free from any tendency to consumption or other hereditary malady.

I shall also require a reference from the

teacher or instructress of the young lady, that I may be assured she has a disposition to improve herself, and a taste for needlework.

My terms will be forty guineas for one year, or sixty for two, which will include every expense except the laundress' and medical attendance, if required. Five guineas must be paid on making the agreement, half the remainder on entrance, and the rest at the expiration of three months.

Further, whenever I have twelve articled pupils on the terms before mentioned, I shall endeavour to do my little part towards lessening the domestic calamity occasioned by the present war, by receiving *without a fee* the orphan daughter of some officer who may have fallen in the conflict. She shall be treated as the daughter of a brave man should be, and enjoy all the privileges of the others; and at the expiration of a year my best endeavours shall be used to place her in a situation, while her place will be again filled, if I prosper, by another young lady under like circumstances.

May I venture to hope that my exertions will meet with encouragement from those who have

it in their power to aid effectually any plans for the well-being of the less fortunate part of the community. Those who have read this little work will know that I have seen much of the difficulties that surround our sex in the pursuit of independence. If I can lessen those difficulties, I achieve an object to which any man or woman might be proud to dedicate a lifetime.

Of governesses and governess agents I have said much, but not a word too much. On this latter subject, emphatically, *I speak that which I know, and testify that I have seen.* Except in one or two instances the system is altogether fraught with mischief; it affords a living to pretenders of no education or connexions, and is injurious in the highest degree to the unhappy dupes who are induced to apply at the offices.

I have only to add, that should any one wish to consult me, either regarding my own establishment or any of the statements made in this little work, I receive visitors EVERY WEDNESDAY, from eleven to three o'clock.

126, ALBANY STREET, REGENT'S PARK,
Nov. 15*th*, 1854.